

Patristic Analogues in Anselm of Canterbury's *Cur Deus Homo*

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PATRISTIC ANALOGUES IN ANSELM OF CANTERBURY'S CUR DEUS HOMO

by

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PATRISTIC ANALOGUES IN ANSELM OF CANTERBURY'S *CUR DEUS HOMO*

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ABSTRACT

The *Cur Deus Homo* (*CDH*) of Anselm of Canterbury is one of the most well-known and yet controversial works in the Anselmian corpus. Anselm's audacious effort to prove the necessity of the Incarnation has been met with varying levels of skepticism and critique in the intervening centuries. Critics of Anselm have taken aim particularly at the language that Anselm used in the *CDH*, commonly asserting that the key terms of the argument were derived primarily from the feudal society that surrounded Anselm as he wrote. The contention is then usually made that Anselm's usage of such terminology betrays a mindset so entangled in feudalism as to render the whole work ineffective as a work of Christian theology. Only in recent years have serious efforts been made to examine the theological roots of Anselm's thought process in the *CDH*. In this work, I examine the language that has been so maligned in recent years and I build on recent trends in Anselm scholarship to argue that his language is not so much feudal as it is scriptural and patristic. By analyzing Anselm's use of "honor," "justice," "debt" and "satisfaction," I argue that Anselm was more concerned with maintaining consistency with his own work and with scriptural and patristic sources than with the feudal or juridical nature of his social context. I conclude by highlighting the ways in which Anselm accomplished his stated purpose in the *CDH* and provided a unique perspective

on the Incarnation and Atonement that stands on its own as a turning point in the history of Christian theology.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDH = *Cur Deus Homo*

M = *Monologion*

DI = *De Incarnatione (Verbi Dei)*

Chapter 1

Introduction and History of Interpretation

Anselm of Canterbury's *Cur Deus Homo* (*CDH*) has been recognized for centuries as one of the hallmark works of the medieval theology of the Incarnation and Atonement. However, in some cases, that recognition has taken the form of infamy instead of renown due to the interpretation of the medieval context in which Anselm wrote. Scholars of various stripes have taken turns at running the *CDH* through a gamut of critiques: from merely pointing out weaknesses to dismissal as un-scriptural and fatally flawed, the *CDH* has weathered a wide-ranging storm of criticism, particularly over the course of the last 200 years.¹ Much of this recent criticism has focused on Anselm's approach to the topics of Incarnation and Atonement. Scholars have found fault with Anselm's characterization of the roles of God, humanity and the God-man in his scheme. Although there is a wide variety of specific criticisms aimed at Anselm, many of his critics have come to a similar conclusion: the fault lies with an improper injection of principles and terminology taken from the feudal society in which Anselm lived. In this dissertation, I attempt to re-cast Anselm's work in the *CDH* as a genuine effort at making the Incarnation and Atonement accessible to non-Christians while remaining faithful to (and predominantly influenced by) scripture and the works of the fathers of the church.

¹ I focus here on recent criticism because it represents a unique perspective on Anselm's work in the history of interpretation. The explicit critique of Anselm as a "feudal" writer did not appear until the 19th century. I have not found evidence of or references to such lines of criticism before this time period.

The thrust of this study will focus on the language that Anselm used – terminology of honor, justice, debt and satisfaction – that critics have interpreted as vestiges of the feudal context, but that I prefer to interpret as making connections between Anselm and his theological (as opposed to social or cultural) influences. The criticism to which I respond is only one portion of the history of reception of the *CDH*, though. In this first chapter, I will lay out the most relevant portions of Anselm’s argument and examine the ways that scholars – from his immediate followers to 21st century readers – have evaluated the work.

Purpose and Argument of the *CDH*

Anselm’s methodological starting point in the *CDH* sets the tone for the most brilliant and controversial portions of the work that follow.² He begins by taking a defensive tact, responding to purported challenges to the logicity of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation and Atonement. Boso, as Anselm’s dialogue partner, presented the challenge: “*obiciunt nobis deridentes simplicitatem nostram infideles quia deo facimus iniuriam et contumeliam...*”³ In the eyes of unbelievers, Christians make the elementary mistake of believing that God could be lowered to the point of experiencing human life and all of the ill effects that come with it “*in uterum mulieris descendisse, natum esse de femina, lacte et alimentis humanis nutritum crevisse, et – ut multa alia taceam quae deo non videntur convenire – lassitudinem, famem, sitim, verbera et inter*

² As will be noted at points later and more fully in the conclusion, it is my opinion that Anselm’s method should not be controversial and, in fact, the points at which Anselm deviates from his stated method are those that are among the weakest in his argument.

³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938)., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 3 (II, 50).

latrones crucem mortemque sustinuisse.”⁴ While these criticisms of unbelievers focused on the mundane effects of human existence, Anselm responded by focusing on the higher level issues that perhaps outweighed (for him, at least) the concerns of unbelievers and would tip the balance of the issue in the other direction. Anselm chose higher level concerns that would have been comprehensible and agreeable to unbelievers, so long as they shared the basic understanding of the nature and qualities of the Judeo-Christian God.⁵ He immediately appeals to the mercy, love and goodness of God in his initial reply:

*Nos non facimus deo iniuriam ullam aut contumeliam, sed toto corde gratias laudamus et praedicamus ineffabilem altitudinem misericordiae illius, quia quanto nos mirabilius et praeter opinionem de tantis et tam debitis malis in quibus eramus, ad tanta et tam indebita bona quae perdideramus, restituit, tanto maiorem dilectionem erga nos et pietatem monstravit. Si enim diligenter considerarent quam convenienter hoc modo procurata sit humana restauratio, non deriderent nostram simplicitatem, sed dei nobiscum laudarent sapientem benignitatem.*⁶

For Anselm, the Christian story of the Incarnation and Atonement avoided injury and insult to the mercy, love and goodness of God (that would have been the case without any response to sin) by the coming of the God-man (and still preserved the perfection of the divine nature in the process).

The concern for what was appropriate for God guided Anselm in his argument.

This is clear from the structure of the *CDH*:⁷

Book I

God and Creation (chapters 1-10)

⁴ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 3 (II, 50).

⁵ This seems to be a safe assumption since the unbelievers objected to aspects of humanity that would have violated divine simplicity, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, etc.

⁶ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 3 (II, 50-51).

⁷ There are many ways of portraying the structure of the *CDH*. I have chosen a simple structure in an attempt to highlight Anselm’s clarity of thought.

Sin (chapters 11-19)

Appropriate Response to Sin (chapters 20-25)

Book II

Nature of the God-man (chapters 1-9)

Death of the God-man (chapters 10-15)

Reconciliation between God and Humanity (chapters 16-22)

Facing critics who found impropriety in a physical manifestation of God in the world,

Anselm began with the first interaction between God and the physical world: creation.

He argued that the Incarnation was inextricably connected to the creation (and subsequent

effects of sin) of the world, specifically human beings: “*Nonne satis necessaria ratio*

videtur, cur deus ea quae dicimus facere debuerit: quia genus humanum, tam scilicet

pretiosum opus eius, omnino perierat, nec decebat ut, quod deus de homine proposuerat,

penitus annihilaretur, nec idem eius propositum ad effectum duci poterat, nisi genus

*hominum ab ipso creatore suo liberaretur?”*⁸ Sin is a clear roadblock to the divine

propositum and Anselm first explored the traditional explanations of the rescue of

humanity (including, notably, his rejection of the idea that God paid a ransom to retrieve

humanity from the control of the devil) before providing his own explanation of the

problem and the solution.

Anselm undertakes the discussion of sin and the response to sin in terms of the relationship between God and humanity (as part of God’s creation). The first major point

of Anselm’s argument is found in his definition of sin in book I, chapter 11: “*Omnis*

voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei... Non est itaque aliud

peccare quam non reddere deo debitum. ...[I]ustitia sive rectitudo voluntatis... est solus

et totus honor, quem debemus deo et a nobis exigit deus. ... Hunc honorem debitum qui

⁸ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 4 (II, 52).

deo non reddit, aufert deo quod suum est, et deum exhonorat; et hoc est peccare.”⁹ Sin is cast as a rupture in the relationship between God and humanity because of the failure to render honor that was owed by humanity to God. The order of the Creator-creation relationship must be maintained/restored and this is done via what Anselm refers to as “satisfaction.” “*Sic ergo debet omnis qui peccat, honorem deo quem rapuit solvere; et haec est satisfactio, quam omnis peccator deo debet facere.*”¹⁰ This is the solution to the problem of sin and Anselm takes the following chapters to reject alternative solutions and to explain in detail the ways in which sin disrupts the order and purpose of creation.

The portion of the argument that sets Anselm apart from so many other theologians is the way that he unpacks what is involved in the satisfaction that solves the problem of sin. He argues first that the disruptive effect of sin is so great that it simultaneously constitutes an infinitely great act of dishonor to God and renders humanity incapable of correcting the situation: “*Nullatenus ergo debet aut potest accipere homo a deo quod deus illi dare proposuit, si non reddit deo totum quod illi abstulit; ut sicut per illum deus perdidit, ita per illum recuperet. ... Sed hoc facere nullatenus potest peccator homo, quia peccator peccatorem iustificare nequit.*”¹¹ The solution to the inability of human beings to solve the problem of sin must involve some being outside the ranks of humanity and Anselm explains in book II how the God-man is the most appropriate, indeed only, solution. Anselm begins his explanation by returning to the creation narrative and the point that God created human beings with a purpose:

“Rationalem naturam a deo factam esse iustam, ut illo fruendo beata esset, dubitari non

⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68). This is a compilation of passages that have been condensed in the interest of clarity.

¹⁰ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68-69).

¹¹ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

debet.”¹² Since the restoration of humanity is part of the same trajectory of divine activity as the creation of humanity, Anselm argues that it is fitting that it is God who joins with humanity to solve the problem of sin and not any other being. Not only does the principle of fittingness point toward a God-man, but he argues that necessity dictates that no one other than God can save humanity. This is due to the fact that no other being can offer anything great enough to make up for the great divine honor that was lost: “*Hoc autem fieri nequit, nisi sit qui solvat deo pro peccato hominis aliquid maius quam omne praeter deum est. ... Illum quoque qui de suo poterit deo dare aliquid, quod superet omne quod sub deo est, maiorem esse necesse est quam omne quod non est deus. ... Nihil autem est supra omne quod deus non est, nisi deus.*”¹³ Since the culpability of humanity was established in book I and the necessity of divinity followed soon after, Anselm finds himself in a place wherein the only logical solution to sin is a combination of humanity and divinity in the God-man: “*Si ergo, sicut constat, necesse est ut de hominibus perficiatur illa superna civitas, nec hoc esse valet, nisi fiat praedicta satisfactio, quam nec potest facere nisi deus nec debet nisi homo: necesse est ut eam faciat deus-homo.*”¹⁴ The remainder of the work deals with the details of how the God-man provides for the salvation of humanity, but the logic of his argument is complete at this point. The mercy, love and goodness of God that were integral in the creation of humanity naturally provided for the redemption of humanity via the God-man: “*Misericordiam vero dei quae tibi perire videbatur, cum iustitiam dei et peccatum hominis considerabamus, tam magnam tamque concordem iustitiae invenimus, ut nec maior nec iustior cogitari*

¹² Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 1 (II, 97).

¹³ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 6 (II, 101).

¹⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 6 (II, 101).

possit.”¹⁵ Thus, Anselm declares that the integrity of the perfection of God, which critics worried were compromised by the Incarnation and Atonement, actually dictated the God-man as a solution to the problem of sin, down to some of the smallest details. Anselm clearly considered his work to be an elegant solution that fit perfectly with scripture: “*per unius quaestionis quam proposuimus solutionem, quidquid in novo veterique testamento continetur, probatum intelligo.*”¹⁶

Early Responses to the *CDH*

The first historically extant reactions to Anselm’s *CDH* did not arise immediately following its composition and there was certainly not the kind of back-and-forth engagement of the issue in the way that Anselm and Gaunilo debated the ontological argument made in the *Proslogion*. This is most likely due to the fact that Anselm wrote it beginning in 1094 while he was Archbishop of Canterbury and toward the end of his life.¹⁷ Michael Robson has tracked the way in which it was circulated through various monastic and cathedral schools up to the point that it was clearly influential on the theological development of prominent early Franciscans, such as Alexander of Hales, and also the Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste.¹⁸ Robson argues that the *CDH* entered the realm of Franciscan scholarship around the same time as the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, since Anselm is absent from the *Sentences* but is included in commentaries on the *Sentences* from the time of Alexander and his Franciscan students, in conversation

¹⁵ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 20 (II, 131).

¹⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 22 (II, 133).

¹⁷ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 202. See the entire chapter nine for a full discussion of the *CDH* and this topic.

¹⁸ Michael Robson, "The Impact of the *Cur Deus Homo* on the Early Franciscan School," in *Anselm, Aosta, Bec and Canterbury: Papers in Commemoration of the Nine-Hundredth Anniversary of Anselm's Enthronement as Archbishop, 25 September 1093*, ed. D. E. Luscombe and G. R. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), see particularly 336-338.

with and in place of the citations from Augustine's *De trinitate* that make up the bulk of Lombard's work on the redemption.¹⁹ J. Patout Burns has traced how the Franciscans and other scholastic theologians (Abelard, the Victorines, Thomas Aquinas, etc.) both expanded upon and departed from Anselm's work in the *CDH* (specifically on the topic of satisfaction).²⁰ In this time period, Anselm was considered to be an authority whose work marked a development from the work of Augustine, although he did not carry the same level of authority as Augustine.²¹ In the following section, I examine the ways in which two of the most prominent theologians following Anselm (Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure of Bagnoregio) were influenced by the *CDH*.

Thomas Aquinas

There are two points in the Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (*ST*) that seem to show evidence that Aquinas had the *CDH* in mind when he articulated his Christological theses. One of the hallmarks of Anselm's work in the *CDH* is his discussion of the necessity of the Incarnation. At the beginning of the third part of the *ST*, Aquinas considers whether "*fuerit necessarium ad reparationem humani generis verbum Dei incarnari*."²² Here he seems to have Anselm's emphatic assertion of the necessity of the Incarnation in mind. In his answer to whether the incarnation was necessary for human salvation, Aquinas makes a distinction between types of necessity:

Respondeo dicendum quod ad finem aliquem dicitur aliquid esse necessarium dupliciter, uno modo, sine quo aliquid esse non potest, sicut cibus est necessarius ad conservationem humanae vitae; alio modo, per

¹⁹ Ibid., 343.

²⁰ J. Patout Burns, "Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory," *Theological Studies* 36, no. 2 (1975).

²¹ See, for example the ways in which Bonaventure and Aquinas engaged the views of Anselm without explicitly citing him in the *Breviloquium* and *Summa Theologiae*, respectively.

²² Thomas Aquinas, "Summa Theologiae," Fundación Tomás de Aquino, <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/>, ST III^a q. 1 a. 2.

*quod melius et convenientius pervenitur ad finem, sicut equus necessarius est ad iter. Primo modo Deum incarnari non fuit necessarium ad reparationem humanae naturae, Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam multis aliis modis reparare. Secundo autem modo necessarium fuit Deum incarnari ad humanae naturae reparationem.*²³

Whereas Anselm takes pains to carve out the exact way in which he views the Incarnation as necessary, Aquinas seems to recognize the importance of the issue, but does not go as far as Anselm does in saying that the way the Incarnation happened was the only possible (and thus necessary) way. Rather, he pointedly goes in the opposite direction.

For Aquinas, Anselm's position seems to be one that he has read, absorbed and then molded to fit his own views. Another of Anselm's key points from the *CDH* that Aquinas has apparently internalized is the argument that human sin has an infinite magnitude that needs to be counteracted. Anselm and Boso discuss in book I, chapter 21 "how heavy the weight of sin is" and conclude that any sin, even a mere glance contrary to the will of God, carries with it stakes as high as "an infinite multiplicity of universes." Anselm uses this point to re-affirm that only God is capable of paying the debt of sin owed by humanity since the debt is so great that no human being is able to pay it. Anselm also makes the point that humans already owe an entire life of obedience to God and have no ability to "give" anything over and above just that. In the same discussion of the necessity of the Incarnation, Aquinas considers the objection that God should simply be willing to accept whatever goodness is within human capacity. Aquinas, focusing on God's honor, replies with an Anselmian answer: "*Tum etiam quia peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem habet ex infinitate divinae maiestatis, tanto enim*

²³ Ibid., III^a q. 1 a. 2 co.

offensa est gravior, quanto maior est ille in quem delinquitur.”²⁴ This key point from Anselm’s *CDH* becomes a given in Aquinas’ context. So, Aquinas seems to have “received” Anselm’s *CDH* in a critical and thoughtful way. Using these passages as examples, one can see that he shows his agreement and disagreement with Anselm through inclusion, revision and critique.

Bonaventure of Bagnoregio

As a key figure in Scholasticism, Aquinas’ Paris colleague Bonaventure clearly paid great attention to the writings of Anselm, following in the steps of Alexander of Hales and his early Franciscan followers. Jacques-Guy Bougerol has pointed out that Bonaventure quotes from the works of Anselm on 249 occasions in his own writings.²⁵ Even though Bougerol contends that “the point on which Anselm’s influence upon Bonaventure seems to have been capital was the concept of God,”²⁶ the most citations from the Anselmian corpus are taken from Anselm’s *De conceptu virginali* (46 citations) and *Cur Deus Homo* (45 citations). While Bonaventure certainly made ample use of Anselm’s definition of God as “that than which a greater cannot be thought,” his interest in Anselm’s explication of the Incarnation is clear.

In Part Four of the *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure discusses the Incarnation as the center point of his systematic theology and in this discussion reveals instances of reliance on the work of Anselm in the *CDH*. His arguments for why it must be God united with man (rather than any other type of being) are strikingly Anselmian: “*Excellentiam namque recuperare non poterat, nisi reparator esset Deus; quia, si mera creatura, tunc*

²⁴ Ibid., III^a q. 1 a. 2 ad 2.

²⁵ Jacques Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, 1st American ed. (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1964). 35.

²⁶ Ibid. 35.

homo esset illi merae creaturae subiectus, et sic non recuperaret statum excellentiae.”²⁷

Bonaventure takes this a step further when he contends that man could not have recovered the purity of original creation without the involvement of mankind in the Atonement process:

Innocentiam vero mentis recuperare non poterat, nisi dimissa culpa; quam dimittere non decebat divinam iustitiam nisi per satisfactionem condignam; et quia satisfacere non poterat nisi Deus pro toto humano genere, nec debebat nisi homo, qui peccaverat: ideo congruentissimum fuit, humanum genus reparari per Deum-hominem natum de genere Adae.²⁸

This hearkens back not only to Anselm’s contention that the debt of sin is of such great magnitude that only God is capable of paying it , but also to the conclusion drawn from it: “no one can pay except God, and no one ought to pay except man: it is necessary that a God-man should pay it” (CDH II, 6).

In addition to following Anselm’s line of reasoning, Bonaventure shows his familiarity with even the smaller points of Anselm’s argument by drawing from the CDH almost word for word in places. In his discussion of the details of the Incarnation, Bonaventure argues that the Virgin conception came about because it completed the set of logical possibilities for the generation of human beings:

...cum ex quatuor modis tres modi producendi hominem praecessissent: primus nec de viro nec muliere, sicut in Adam; secundus de viro sine muliere, sicut in Eva; tertius de muliere et viro, sicut in omnibus concupiscibiliter natis: decuit, ad complementum universi quartum modum introduce, qui scilicet esset de muliere sine semine virili per virtutem summi operatoris.²⁹

²⁷ Bonaventure, *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia*, 10 vols., vol. 5 (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1891)., B pars IV, cap. 1 (V, 241).

²⁸ Ibid. , B pars IV, cap. 1 (V, 242).

²⁹ Ibid. , B pars IV, cap. 3 (V, 244).

This section is taken directly from the *Cur Deus Homo* in which Anselm writes the following:

Quatuor modis potest deus hominem facere. Videlicet aut de viro et femina, sicut assiduus monstrat usus; aut nec de viro nec de femina, sicut creavit ADAM; aut de viro sine femina, sicut fecit EVAM; aut de femina sine viro, quod nondum fecit. Ut igitur hunc quoque modum probet suae subiacere potestati et ad hoc ipsum opus dilatum esse, nil convenientius, quam ut de femina sine viro assumat illum hominem quem quaerimus. Utrum autem de virgine aut de non-virgine dignius hoc fiat, non est opus disputare, sed sine omni dubitatione asserendum est quia de virgine deum-hominem nasci oportet.³⁰

This makes it quite obvious that Bonaventure was closely integrating Anselmian thought into his systematic theological work.

To more and less extents, both Aquinas and Bonaventure incorporate and respond to Anselm's work in the *CDH* (Bonaventure seemingly "more" and Aquinas "less"). By including him in summary and systematic works, though, both place the *CDH* within the realm of past, or inherited, theology. For them, the *CDH* is a "given," a work that had earned the respect of theologians and was worthy of having its ideas culled and gathered together in "big-picture" works. Aquinas does this matter-of-factly without directly mentioning Anselm while Bonaventure at times draws from the *CDH* almost word-for-word. Both draw from Anselm with regard to some of the most central themes in the theology of the Incarnation: the necessity of the Incarnation and the magnitude of sin. I would like to argue that both Aquinas and Bonaventure recognize the *CDH* as an important work in the theology of the Incarnation and both bring their own works into conversation with the *CDH* much as they would Augustine, Abelard or Lombard's *Sentences*. Less than 200 years after his death, Anselm's work has been established as a

³⁰ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. II, cap. 8 (II, 104).

reliable, considerable tome on the Incarnation. Even though they do not agree with every point that Anselm makes, Aquinas and Bonaventure seem to find Anselm's work sufficiently cogent and accessible for them to both engage it and adopt it.

Burns points out that by the time of John Duns Scotus in the early 14th century, the focus of theological work on the Incarnation and Atonement had turned from the idea of satisfaction to that of the merit of Christ.³¹ With that turn, Anselm's work in the *CDH* faded to the background of theological work, especially during the period of the Reformation and counter-reformation. It was not until the 19th century that Anselm's work was taken up again in the effort to produce textbook histories of dogma. This effort most notably included the influential work of Adolf Harnack and his *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*.³²

Harnack

Harnack's work set the tone for the interpretation for the *CDH* in the first half of the 20th century, since his work was so widely read. Harnack praised Anselm for the areas in which he found agreement with his own theological perspective, but spent the majority of his analysis detailing the faults of the *CDH*. He begins his critique by asserting that "there are so many defects that this theory is entirely untenable," though he admits that "to a great extent these defects lie so much on the surface."³³ Harnack divides his critique of Anselm's work in the *CDH* into three broad points, under which he makes several specific claims. His first critique is that the *CDH* is riddled with

³¹ Burns, "Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory.", 301-303. Additionally, Scotus had little use for the kind of unconditional necessity that Anselm appealed to in the *CDH* and this also marked a significant departure in the history of theology.

³² Adolf Harnack, *Lehrbuch Der Dogmengeschichte*, 3 vols. (Freiburg: Mohr, 1886).

³³ ———, *History of Dogma*, ed. T.K. Cheyne and A.B. Bruce, trans. William McGilchrist, vol. 6, Theological Translation Library (London: Williams & Norgate, 1899)., 70.

inconsistencies: the line of argumentation depends on both necessity and fittingness (which are improperly used interchangeably, according to Harnack); appeals are made to both the ideas of “satisfaction” and “merit,” which Harnack views as incompatible with each other; the concepts of divine “honor” and “righteousness” are used in contradictory ways; the possibility of pardon for humanity is dismissed but never properly explained; God is considered to be unaffected by humanity, but the whole argument seems to hinge on the idea of a give-and-take relationship between God and humanity; and, finally, Harnack contends that Anselm’s argument makes the death of the God-man involuntary, even though theological propriety and his own disclaimers indicate otherwise.³⁴ This multi-faceted critique is essentially an attack on Anselm’s methodology in the *CDH*. Many of these points will be addressed in later chapters, but let it suffice to say that perhaps only one of these points gets to the heart of Anselm’s line of reasoning. The point that reaches to the heart of the *CDH* is the third point above, that Anselm uses “honor” and “righteousness” in contradictory ways. I will address this in chapters two and three, but a short reply is as follows: Harnack argues that the reasoning of the *CDH* depends on the idea of divine honor being violated by sin, but Anselm’s conception of divine righteousness demands that divine honor not be violated at all. Anselm acknowledges this tension in book I, chapters 13, 14 and 15 by explaining that the eternal perfection and continuity of divine action is not compromised by temporal human actions. The violation of divine honor by sin was real, but it was also resolved. This seems to settle the matter for Anselm, however, this critique of Harnack is striking

³⁴ Ibid., 71-73.

enough to have been repeated and expanded by later interpreters, most notably J. Denny Weaver.³⁵

Harnack's second point is that Anselm poorly navigates "the old ecclesiastical material"³⁶ relating to the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ (the God-man, in Anselm's terminology). Harnack argues that Anselm has departed from "Athanasius and the Fathers of dogma"³⁷ (basically, the work of Greek Patristic theologians) by assigning unsuitable or undesirable predicates to the human nature of the God-man instead of the divine nature. This represents "a quite Nestorian diremption of the person"³⁸ for Harnack, though he admits that Anselm is not alone among the theologians of the Western church in doing this. As such, this is more a critique of Augustine and Anselm's Western theological inheritance than of Anselm himself.

Harnack characterizes his third point as a collection of "the gravest objections to be urged against the whole character of the Anselmic doctrine."³⁹ These include some broad allegations of employing false logic and using an improper definition of sin (even though Anselm explains his understanding of sin). Harnack also objects to the lack of appeal to scripture and the lack of a place for the Church in the *CDH*. However, Anselm explicitly works around these items in taking his apologetic approach (or at least an approach that attempted to avoid the alienation of non-Christian readers); appeals to scripture and mention of the Church would be inconsistent with his stated methodology.

Finally, Harnack leveled his harshest and most resounding critique, which he considers to

³⁵ See J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001). See also the full discussion of this point in chapter 3 and the way in which I argue that Anselm would respond to Weaver.

³⁶ Harnack, *History of Dogma*., 73.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

be “the worst thing in Anselm’s theory: “the mythological conception of God as the mighty private man, who is incensed at the injury done to His honour and does not forgo His wrath till He has received an at least adequately great equivalent...”⁴⁰ Harnack expands upon his description of this aspect of Anselm’s approach, using adjectives such as “Gnostic,” “frightful,” “blasphemous,” and “dreadful.”⁴¹ Harnack’s conclusion is that Anselm (in the course of his “good intentions”) proves, at best, “only the *possibility* of our being saved.”⁴² Ultimately, though, he takes such a low view of Anselm and his work that he asserts that “no theory so bad had ever before his day been given out as *ecclesiastical*.”⁴³ Clearly Harnack finds no good place for Anselm’s work in the *CDH* and he seems to consider the work to be corrupted, both in terms of methodology and content, by historical, social and theological influences. This wide-ranging indictment of the *CDH* still resonates in the world of theology today and it certainly set the tone for the interpretation of Anselm’s atonement theory in the decades following Harnack. It has been nearly impossible to find a thorough examination of Anselm’s work that does not either repeat or respond to Harnack’s assessment. As John McIntyre would later write, all critical commentators following him are “variations of, or deductions from, what Harnack had said.”⁴⁴

Foley

In the English-speaking world, George C. Foley expanded on Harnack’s critique in one of the most important monographs devoted to the *CDH* in the first half of the 20th

⁴⁰ Ibid., 76.

⁴¹ Ibid., 76-77.

⁴² Ibid., 77.

⁴³ Ibid., 77-78.

⁴⁴ John McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo* (Edinburgh,: Oliver and Boyd, 1954)., 186.

century, his book *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement*.⁴⁵ Foley views the *CDH* as a turning-point in the history of theology of the Atonement, but he sees it as a negative point of demarcation:

It is contrasted with the patristic teaching from which it is not derived, and with the Reformation theory to which it contributed the leading ideas. It marks the turning-point at which the legal and external and purely logical and objective conception of God's relation to us displaced the personal and organic and biological, after which the theology of the Atonement takes an entirely novel direction.⁴⁶

Foley makes it his goal to extract a “simpler and more Scriptural expression of the redemptive work of Christ” from the legacy of Anselm's work, which he considers to be “misleading and dishonouring and inhibitive to faith.”⁴⁷ He attempts to do so by examining the patristic precursors to Anselm, Anselm's own theory (along with what he perceives to be Anselm's direct influences, both from among and outside of the church fathers), and the legacy of Anselm's work (both his immediate successors and the reaction to his work in the era of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation). He follows this historical approach with his own assessment of the value of Anselm's work on the Atonement.

Leaving the details of Foley's critique to the later points of this present work to which they are most germane, I would like to highlight his conclusions and their place in the history of interpretation of Anselm. In the course of his analysis, he lays out three broad critiques in a manner similar to Harnack's approach: 1) the *CDH* not only works around the evidence of scripture, it also takes an approach that is neither found in nor

⁴⁵ George Cadwalader Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

compatible with scripture;⁴⁸ 2) the work is not logical and is fraught with contradictions;⁴⁹ and 3) Anselm was too much influenced by feudalism and the penitential system of the institutional church.⁵⁰ Foley then went on to expand on these points in detail and I will address those details through the course of this study, but, generally speaking, Foley seems unconvinced that Anselm was able to overcome his circumstances – both his societal influences and the motivation for writing the work – to produce an acceptable work on the Atonement. In the end, he took issue with Anselm’s methodology of approaching the salvation of humanity from a putatively objective position without appealing to scripture and attempting to make clear the mysteries of the Christian faith to a non-Christian audience:

Anselm’s adoption of a purely objective interpretation of Christ’s work, his assumption of an ability to penetrate into the esoteric relations of the Trinity, made him primarily responsible for the intrusive prying into Divine mysteries, and for the confident familiarity with the unrevealed portions of truth that issued in the dogmatic tyranny so conspicuous in the Protestant churches.⁵¹

Foley, like Harnack before him, contrasts Anselm’s approach with that of scripture, specifically the Gospels and the letters of Paul. He acknowledges that this critique may be best applied to Scholasticism in general, but Foley clearly prefers to prioritize scripture over the work of theologians in both methodology and content. He then goes out of his way to commend Anselm on two points: removing the devil from the story of the salvation of humanity and the emphasis on the importance of personal salvation without any necessary mediation of the Church. This latter point he attributes to

⁴⁸ Ibid., 143-145.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 145-146.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 147.

⁵¹ Ibid., 256-257.

Anselm's monastic influences and lauds Anselm for "a fresh and powerful statement of the Incarnation of Christ, one with man and one with God, which assured mankind that the Divine attitude towards each one of the redeemed was goodness, not severity."⁵² Foley sees such a strong emphasis on un-mediated, individual salvation in Anselm that he goes so far as to call him "the spiritual forerunner of Luther."⁵³ While this may be a dramatic bit of hyperbole and Foley acknowledges that Anselm himself would not agree with or have anticipated this interpretation of his work, it is clear that Foley does find some use for Anselm's work, if only in terms of content and not necessarily methodology. It should be noted, though, that even these elements of the *CDH* that Foley finds beneficial pale in comparison to the overall tone of disdain that Foley takes throughout the work.

Aulén

Gustaf Aulén set the tone for the interpretation of the *CDH* in the middle of the 20th century with the publication of a series of lectures he gave in 1930 in the book *Christus Victor*.⁵⁴ Here, Aulén sketches a history of the Christian doctrine of the atonement in which he pits the so-called "Latin" theory inaugurated by Anselm against the "Classic" view espoused by early Christian theologians such as Athanasius and Augustine. In so doing, he drives a wedge between Anselm and those theologians whom I consider to have been influential for him in the development of the *CDH*. Thus, Aulén's work is especially important here, since he disagrees with the present analysis so sharply. Like Foley, Aulén considers Tertullian to be Anselm's most important influence

⁵² Ibid., 259.

⁵³ Ibid., 259.

⁵⁴ Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*, trans. A. G. Hebert (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

with regard to the Atonement, albeit indirectly. He ties Tertullian's use of the term "satisfaction" with the development of the idea of penance in the Western ("Latin," in Aulén's terminology) church: "In Tertullian, we find the fundamental conceptions of *satisfaction* and *merit*: both words apply to penance. ... Thus Penance is satisfaction, the acceptance of a temporal penalty to escape eternal loss."⁵⁵ Aulén blames the high profile of the penitential system in the church for the errors he finds in the views of Anselm and others: "It must be strongly emphasised that it was on the basis of the penitential system that the Latin theory grew up. ... The Latin idea of penance provides the sufficient explanation of the Latin doctrine of the Atonement."⁵⁶ Although the penitential system rose to prominence in the same time frame as his lauded "Classic" view, Aulén dismisses this as more of an accident of chronology: "The Latin doctrine thus begins to appear quite early in the patristic period, in the Western Church; but, as we have seen, during that period it never became the dominant view in the West, but was only gradually working its way forward, not without opposition."⁵⁷ Thus, Aulén's "Latin" theory primarily stands for the atonement theories of the medieval church and primarily the work of Anselm. He makes this clear from the start in his assessment of the *CDH*: "The Latin theory of the Atonement first appears fully developed in the *Cur Deus homo?* of Anselm; a book which has been so universally regarded as the typical expression of the Latin

⁵⁵ Ibid., 81.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 82. The ellipses in this quote take the place of the following sentence that seems a bit out of place: "The suggestion sometimes made, that the origin of Anselm's doctrine is to be found in Germanic Law, is either beside the mark or flatly incorrect." This seems to be an odd place for Aulén to throw in this tidbit since he hadn't been directly discussing Anselm. However, it is clear that he indirectly connects Tertullian and Anselm (via penance) and others (Foley being one) have argued for a connection between Tertullian and the ideas of "Germanic Law." Since Aulén goes on to decry the juristic nature of the Latin theory, it is somewhat surprising that he makes the effort here to separate Anselm from Germanic Law. Perhaps he felt that a connection between Anselm and the system of penance (that was the object of Luther's scorn) was a more damning critique.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 83.

theory, that this theory has commonly been known as the Anselmian doctrine, and that the controversy on the Atonement has continually centred round Anselm's name.”⁵⁸

Aulén wisely acknowledged that criticisms of the *CDH* are frequently the result of misinterpretations of Anselm and he contends that this applies to both opponents and supporters of Anselm. For his part, he claims to focus on one issue in his interpretation of the *CDH*: “This is the decisive issue; and, therefore, the crucial question is really this: Does Anselm treat the atoning work of Christ as the work of God Himself from start to finish?”⁵⁹ Aulén proceeds by arguing first that “the whole structure [of Anselm's argument] is built on the basis of the penitential system.”⁶⁰ While there is no question that Anselm's thought would have been strongly influenced by the penitential system in which he lived (in his monastic context), it is not clear from the text that it is foundational or even necessary for Anselm's argument. Aulén offers no proof-text for this and his only explanation appeals to the Anselmian idea that human beings are indelibly connected to making recompense for sin since human beings were responsible for sin. However, as will be discussed in the later chapter devoted to Anselm's use of the idea of “satisfaction,” Anselm does not base his idea of recompense directly on the penitential system or the regulations found therein. Although Aulén does not go into extended detail on this point, it is part of the evidence from his own text that shows that he focused strongly on Anselm's social context in explaining the theological concepts in the *CDH*. This focus leads Aulén to characterize the *CDH* as a narrative in which God and humanity are divided, rather than united. He points to the different abilities and

⁵⁸ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 86.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 86.

obligations of God and humanity in Anselm's system of atonement. In this case, though, Aulén seems to be stretching the point of differences between God and humanity far beyond necessity. Perhaps he overstates Anselm's point that "the required satisfaction must be made by man"⁶¹ since he takes this as an indication that "the Incarnation and the Atonement are not organically connected together, as they were in the classic view."⁶² He argues that Anselm has neglected "the doctrine of the Incarnation, [which] is no longer with him a fully living idea, as it was to the Fathers."⁶³

It is on the basis of a dichotomy between the activity of God and humanity in the *CDH* that Aulén drives his argument against the Latin theory. He even goes so far as to distinguish between the activity of Christ and that of God when he lays out what he sees as the difference between Anselm and those who preceded him: "Here, then, the contrast between Anselm and the Fathers is as plain as daylight. They show how God became incarnate that He might redeem; he teaches a human work of satisfaction, accomplished by Christ."⁶⁴ Although he acknowledges the accomplishment of Christ, Aulén seems convinced that Anselm's atonement theory is ultimately a story of human efforts to make satisfaction, over and above any divine activity. He views Anselm as relegating divine activity to the "big picture" issues of motivation and inception: "God is the author of the plan, and He has sent His Son and ordered it so that the required satisfaction shall be

⁶¹ Ibid., 87.

⁶² Ibid., 87.

⁶³ Ibid., 87. This leads him to point out what he considers to be the "significant emphasis on the dignity of man (p. 87) by Anselm. The particular example is the idea that satisfaction cannot be made by anyone other than God or a human (an angel or non-Adamic human). However, he incorrectly characterizes Anselm's refusal to allow this as a protection measure for the dignity of human beings. Yet, as will be seen in the later chapters on Anselm's use of "honor" and "satisfaction," it is clear from the text that the "dignity" of both God and humanity are at stake with respect to this particular issue. Aulén seems to have overplayed, if not simply manufactured, an "over-emphasis" on humanity in the *CDH*.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 88.

made. Nevertheless, it is not in the full sense God's work of redemption."⁶⁵ Aulén points out two specific examples of this in Anselm's work. First, he objects to Anselm's repudiation of the ransom theory and what he considers to be a minimizing of the defeat of the devil in the process of atonement. Second, he objects to the disjunction between forgiveness and satisfaction. While the first objection is straightforward, he takes the second as an indication that Anselm is too limited in his perspective. He views both alternatives as lacking a clear, active role for God. Instead, Aulén contends that Anselm has substituted a legal system for God: "This rigid dilemma fastens the doctrine of the Atonement into a juridical scheme. It is an indispensable necessity that God shall receive the satisfaction which alone can save forgiveness from becoming laxity; and this need is met by Christ's death."⁶⁶ In Anselm's system of satisfaction, Aulén finds only a passive God whose relationship with mankind is subject to some cosmic justice system: "The relation of man to God is treated by Anselm as essentially a legal relation, for his whole effort is to prove that the atoning work is in accordance with justice."⁶⁷ While I will reserve a full reply to this objection for the later chapter of this work devoted to Anselm's understanding of "justice," let it suffice to say that Aulén fails to take into account that Anselm considers God to be "justice" itself and any cosmic order to which the relationship between God and humanity conforms is only the divine order (which is ultimately God) itself. However, Aulén sees a "juridical idea" in Anselm that he does not find in his reading of the "classic teaching" and he considers this to be a damning feature of Anselm's position.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 88.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 90.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 90.

In addition to Anselm's supposed juridical approach, Aulén finds fault with the rational approach of the *CDH*. He broadly takes issue with Anselm's methodology of necessity and rational explanations and contrasts it (as he did with the previous issue) with earlier atonement theories: "...the classic idea of the Atonement defies rational systematization; its essential double-sidedness, according to which God is at once the Reconciler and the Reconciled, constitutes an antinomy which cannot be resolved by a rational statement."⁶⁸ This frustration with the rational approach that avoids scripture is an echo of both Harnack and Foley. Aulén joins them in pointing out the contrast between Anselm's work and the work of both scripture and the church fathers. Overall, Aulén objects to what he considers to be both the content and the methodology of Anselm's approach. He accuses Anselm of taking an overly-rational approach that minimizes (and in some cases excludes) the role of God in the atonement. For the most part, he views Anselm as substituting a juridical order for the divine order and he attributes this to the medieval social context in which the *CDH* was constructed: "All this goes to show that the Latin doctrine of the Atonement is closely related to the legalism characteristic of the mediæval outlook."⁶⁹ Thus, Aulén carries forward the critiques of Harnack and Foley in finding Anselm to be overcome by legalism and rationalism in his approach to the Incarnation and Atonement.

After his scathing assessment of Anselm, Aulén goes on to argue that Luther revived the lauded classic position in his own atonement theory. While this is not of primary importance here, it is useful to note that Aulén explains away Luther's use of similar language to Anselm's language in the *CDH*. With regard to "satisfaction," Aulén

⁶⁸ Ibid., 91.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 92.

contends that Luther “speaks of satisfaction in relation to the wrath of God, and this association gives us at once his meaning. His conception of the wrath of God and the way in which it is overcome shows that there is no thought here of a satisfaction of the legal claims of the Divine justice; for it is God Himself, the Divine blessing, which in Christ prevails over the wrath and the curse.”⁷⁰ For Aulén, Luther’s use of “Latin” terms like “satisfaction” is “in direct relation to Christ’s conflict and His victory over the tyrants...”⁷¹ In his explication of the “Christus Victor” theory, he wants to avoid any attempt “to measure Luther by the standards of the Latin theory,”⁷² since that is, for Aulén, nearly the opposite of the atonement that he seeks to draw out as most prominent in the history of Christianity. So, Aulén not only found fault with Anselm’s theory of atonement, but he did so by drawing it into contrast with what he felt to be an understanding of Luther’s atonement theory. This seems to give some indication of the source of Aulén’s contention with Anselm: he sought to distinguish the latter from Luther, especially in light of the usage of “satisfaction,” in order to answer any objection that Luther may not have lined up with his “Christus Victor” approach. Anselm, then, serves as a foil for the larger point that Aulén was attempting to make.

McIntyre

In the world of English-speaking scholarship, the first person to make a thorough defense against Anselm’s treatment at the hands of the textbook theologians (Harnack, et al.) and Protestant critics (Foley, Aulén, et al.) was John McIntyre in his book “St.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 118.

⁷¹ Ibid., 118.

⁷² Ibid., 119.

Anselm and His Critics”⁷³ in 1954. McIntyre specifically addressed the critiques of Harnack and Aulén (among others), though his primary focus was to offer a re-interpretation of the *CDH* that would both offer insight into Anselm’s method and stand up to modern critiques. McIntyre argued that a correct interpretation of the *CDH* requires first the recognition “of the supreme importance in the theology of St. Anselm of the concept of the *aseitas* of God.”⁷⁴ McIntyre understands Anselm to be using it to describe the following divine characteristics: “self-sufficiency ..., independence, self-origination in volition, freedom and, above all, grace and graciousness.”⁷⁵ McIntyre argues throughout his evaluations of Anselm’s methodology, hamartiology, Christology and Soteriology that Anselm’s positions always return to the idea of aseity – that God always acts in consistency with the divine nature and there is no other motivation, cause or purpose for divine activity, including all activity related to the Incarnation and Atonement. In the words of McIntyre, “The concept is, as we should expect, to be found influencing most of St. Anselm’s accounts of God and of His actions: it enters into his description of God’s grace, of God’s initiative in purposing man’s salvation, of His volitional acts, of Christ’s sinlessness and that of the angels, and of Christ’s decision to die, while it affects, too, his analysis of human behaviour.”⁷⁶ So, McIntyre argues that a proper understanding of Anselm’s use of aseity is key both for understanding the *CDH* and for addressing the critics who have found fault with Anselm in the modern era. His work is particularly useful for finding consistency in Anselm (and between the *CDH* and

⁷³ McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo*.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 165.

other Anselmian works) and in gaining perspective on the faulty interpretations of Anselm that had gone relatively unchallenged to this point in time.

Southern

R.W. Southern composed some of the most insightful and comprehensive works on Anselm in the 20th century. Writing from a historian's perspective, Southern exposed Anselm's life and works to the audience of theological scholarship in a compelling framework through his books on Anselm. Southern's focus was primarily on the history of Anselm's life and work and he laid the foundation for generations of scholars to understand the connection between Anselm's life and the works he penned at various stages of his life. He accomplished this primarily through his book "Saint Anselm and His Biographer,"⁷⁷ but he also covered similar topics in his later (and probably better-known) book "Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape."⁷⁸ What is of most relevance for the present work is the way in which Southern connected Anselm's religious, political and social context to the *CDH*. In his earlier work, he referred to the *CDH* as "Anselm's greatest intellectual achievement" and "the climax of his theological development."⁷⁹ Southern went on to examine the theological culture of Anselm's day, particularly regarding the time leading up to the writing of the *CDH*. He details the challenge of Roscelin to which Anselm had already begun to respond and the tendency of others, including the important school at Laon, to affirm the doctrine of the Incarnation without

⁷⁷ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-1130*, The Birkbeck Lectures, 1959 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

⁷⁸ Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*. This is mostly a republication of what Southern wrote in his earlier work, with some condensation and changes.

⁷⁹ ———, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-1130.*, 77.

regard for contemporary challenges.⁸⁰ Southern makes it clear that Anselm was doing something new in the *CDH* even though he composed the work in the midst of a time in which he was attempting to maintain as much consistency between his current life as Archbishop of Canterbury and his previous life as an abbot and monk at Bec.

After summarizing the argument and its key features, Southern turns his attention primarily to the issue of “feudal imagery” in the *CDH*. He notes that the way that Anselm used the “honour” of God in his argument leaves a “disagreeable impression”⁸¹ on many readers. Southern points out that this type of language that can be interpreted as reflecting Anselm’s feudal context and “nothing in this much criticized work has offered an easier target for indignation and ridicule than his use of feudal concepts.”⁸² However, he acknowledges that, from a theological perspective, McIntyre’s work “has effectively answered the criticism that the *Cur Deus Homo* is irretrievably feudal in temper. Everything of importance in Anselm’s argument can survive the removal of every trace of feudal imagery and the supposed contamination by elements of Germanic law.”⁸³ Still, though, the historian in Southern cannot ignore the language that seemingly resonates feudal culture. He contends that, even if McIntyre’s point stands, the *CDH* is not the same if it is understood completely apart from feudal society:

Even if the argument can be stated without any feudal imagery, it is nevertheless also true that Anselm’s thoughts about God and the universe were very much coloured by the social arrangements with which he was familiar. The formal argument can survive, but its temper is quite different if the contemporary imagery is removed; equally it is quite different if the monastic fervour is brushed aside.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Ibid., 82-87.

⁸¹ Ibid., 107.

⁸² Ibid., 107.

⁸³ Ibid., 108.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 108.

He goes on to use the idea of “honor” as an example, drawing on not only the *CDH* but also letters and notes from his lectures. While I will leave a full discussion of this area aside here until the next chapter, it is important to note that Southern does distinguish between the feudal imagery in the *CDH* and what is found in his less formal works. Southern prefers to read the evidence from the sermons and conversations into the more formal work of the *CDH*. He makes this clear in his summary remarks: “The feudal and monastic illustrations, which are closely related in his spoken words and hinted at in the *Cur Deus Homo* illustrate the principle from the facts of everyday life. They are complementary expressions of Anselm’s argument.”⁸⁵ For Southern, then, the *CDH* contains hints of feudal influence for which he finds confirmation in other works. Although he does not directly criticize Anselm for the influence of his social context, he admits that this may make the *CDH* unattractive and inaccessible to modern readers.

Hopkins

After Southern, the next prominent scholar to devote significant attention to Anselm and the *CDH* was the philosopher Jasper Hopkins. Aside from authoring translations of Anselm’s works, Hopkins wrote a wide-ranging analysis of Anselm and his works in his book *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm*.⁸⁶ He devoted most of his chapter on “Christology and Soteriology” to the *CDH* (along with the ancillary works that Anselm wrote afterward). Here, Hopkins attempts to systematize and clarify Anselm’s work. He does this by dividing the work topically into four questions (and Anselm’s responses). In his final section (“How can Christ’s sacrifice outweigh the sins

⁸⁵ Ibid., 114.

⁸⁶ Jasper Hopkins, *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm* (Minneapolis,: University of Minnesota Press, 1972).

of all men?”), Hopkins seems to find Anselm’s position lacking completeness and logic. He takes issue with Anselm’s use of “ought” (and its variants) and contends that Anselm has not proved the case that a human from the race of Adam (in contrast to another sort of human, created outside of the lineage of Adam) must be joined with God in the God-man in order to provide for the salvation of humanity. While the details of Hopkins’ argument will be examined later in chapter four, it is important to note here that Hopkins, a sympathetic reader of Anselm much like Southern, has found fault in the method and logic of the *CDH*.

Recent Anselm Interpretation

The last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century have been marked by two extremes in scholarly treatment of the *Cur Deus Homo*: a number of defenders of Anselm have arisen and defended Anselm in published articles and books while at the same time theological ethicists have raised warning flags about the way that the *CDH* may be used by those who over-emphasize the role of punishment in the Atonement. The latter group seems to have picked up on some of the classic critiques by the likes of Harnack and Aulén and, for some unknown reason, singled out Anselm in the history of Atonement theology as a particularly negative figure. At the same time, a number of article-length works appeared in which comparisons were drawn between Anselm’s work in the *CDH* and similar efforts by Patristic authors, particularly Eastern church fathers.

Hart

David Bentley Hart composed an important and oft-cited article in *Pro Ecclesia* in 1998 in which he offered what he called an “Eastern Orthodox appreciation of Anselm’s

Cur Deus Homo.⁸⁷ In addition to the range of Western critics, Hart also responded to criticism of Anselm by Eastern theologians, most notably Vladimir Lossky. According to Hart, “Lossky takes special offense at the scandal of a book putatively explaining the Incarnation, but attempting to do so without reference to divinization, victory over hell, or the role of the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁸ While Hart helpfully sketches the ways that Lossky adds an Eastern perspective (and critique) to the litany of Western criticisms of Anselm, he astutely worries that decades of criticism may only serve to conceal benefits found in a thorough examination of the *CDH*: “A question that might be asked here, however, is whether the actual text of *Cur Deus Homo* has not been lost to view, behind the welter of adverse judgments brought to bear upon it. To begin with, it is not at all clear that Anselm’s language simply reflects the logic of sacramental penance, the logic of attempting to make reparation to God for particular sins.”⁸⁹ Hart recognizes the line of criticism based on Anselm’s language and seeks to turn it on its head. He helpfully crafts an argument based on Anselm’s own work, but the most valuable section of his article is the comparative effort he makes between Anselm and Athanasius. Hart does this not only to answer critics of Anselm but also with an intentional eye toward exposing to an Eastern audience the commonalities between one of the more celebrated Eastern Fathers and Anselm, who has not been traditionally lauded in Eastern theological circles. Hart approaches this by focusing on the use of the language of “honor” and “debt” that is common to both Anselm and Athanasius. Although the details will be examined in later

⁸⁷ David Bentley Hart, “A Gift Exceeding Every Debt: An Eastern Orthodox Appreciation of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo*,” *Pro Ecclesia* VII, no. 3 (1998).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 340.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

chapters, Hart's conclusion after listing multiple points of similarity (if not sameness) between Athanasius and Anselm is particularly helpful:

Already present in Athanasius's account is the very story whose inner shape Anselm will, in a moment of intense critical reflection, attempt to grasp as necessity. Already, in Athanasius's theology, one finds the language of punishment used, but subordinate to the narrative of complete and unmerited forgiveness, and the language of law employed to describe the depths of infinite mercy. As it is with Athanasius, so it is with Anselm.⁹⁰

In addition to the points of comparison between Athanasius and Anselm (offered as a counterpoint to those who suggest that there is a drastic difference between the church fathers and Anselm), Hart also responds directly to critics of Anselm's language: "The rigidity, the dryness, that even Anselm's Western critics feel moved to deplore in the *Cur Deus Homo* is no aspect of the text itself, I would contend; rather it is an impression only, one bred by a largely illusory familiarity with Anselm's argument."⁹¹ Hart, then, has turned the tables on critics of the *CDH* who both dismiss the language and set it apart from the theologies of Incarnation and Atonement from the Patristic period. This marks a clear shift in scholarly interpretation of the *CDH*.

McMahon

Just two years after the publication of Hart's article, two papers by Anselm scholars on the *CDH* were independently presented at conferences and published the following year in the proceedings. The first was by Kevin A. McMahon, with his article, "The Cross and the Pearl: Anselm's Patristic Doctrine of the Atonement."⁹² McMahon wrote in response to Aulén in particular, but also to critics of Anselm in general. In

⁹⁰ Ibid., 347.

⁹¹ Ibid., 347.

⁹² Kevin A. McMahon, "The Cross and the Pearl: Anselm's Patristic Doctrine of the Atonement," in *Saint Anselm - His Origins and Influence*, ed. John R. Fortin (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

contrast to Aulén, McMahon argues that “rather than constitute a break with the tradition of the Fathers, Anselm in fact represents a continuation of their very point of view.”⁹³ He then goes on to survey similarities between the *CDH* and Irenaeus, Athanasius and even Nestorius. McMahon pulls all of this together in what he terms a “preliminary demonstration” of consistency between Anselm and the tradition from which so many critics have sought to drive a wedge. He concludes that his “preliminary demonstration” has shown that “Anselm’s talk in the *Cur Deus Homo* of justice, of debt, and of our paying off our debt, has deep patristic roots; which is all the more significant when one considers that Augustine is the only Father upon whom he seems to depend in the work, and one of only a handful of Church Fathers he seems to have known first-hand.”⁹⁴ This is a clear counterpoint to those critics who have sought to dismiss Anselm’s work, and particularly his language, in the *CDH* as different and disconnected from Biblical and Patristic understandings of the Incarnation and Atonement.

Rogers

The other paper that appeared at roughly the same time as McMahon’s was by one scholar of Anselm who has offered some of the most thorough defenses of his work: Katherin A. Rogers. In addition to her books in which she explores Anselm’s neo-Platonic approach in his philosophical system, Rogers has also provided a brief riposte to critics of the *Cur Deus Homo* in her article entitled simply, “A Defense of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* Argument.”⁹⁵ Rogers wrote in response to those critics who contend that the

⁹³ Ibid., 61.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 65.

⁹⁵ Katherin A. Rogers, “A Defense of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* Argument,” in *Philosophical Theology: Reason and Theological Doctrine*, ed. Michael Baur, *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (Bronx, NY: American Catholic Philosophical Association, 2001).

CDH is “at best implausible, and at worst, implausible and offensive” and that it “portrays God as a feudal lord and embraces the most negative aspects associated with that image, painting a picture of God as absolutely powerful and perhaps possessed of a glacial justice, but jealous and pitiless.”⁹⁶ As a philosopher (distinct from McMahon as a theologian), Rogers was concerned more for the plausibility of Anselm’s argument than for making historical connections with theological precedent. Still, Rogers focuses on Anselm’s use of terms such as “honor” in showing that, negative connotations aside, Anselm used the term intentionally: “From the perspective of the philosopher I hope to show that Anselm’s argument has force, and that the term ‘honor’ is exactly the right word in context.”⁹⁷ Leaving the details of Rogers’ point to the appropriate chapter later in this work, it is important to note that Rogers finds Anselm’s language to be philosophically appropriate, in addition to the theological pertinence highlighted by McMahon. Ultimately, Rogers concludes that Anselm’s language is indicative of an emphasis on the biological connectedness of humanity and that is the key to understanding the plausibility of a God-man: “Apparently, for Anselm, biological connections really matter. If so, then it is not implausible to think that, just as a country or a corporation may owe a debt, so may the race of Adam. ... Christ does not personally owe the debt, but He is a bona fide member of the race, and so if the race owes, He can pay.”⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Ibid., 187.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 191.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 197.

Gaspar

The survey of articles by Hart, McMahon and Rogers are indicative of a trend in recent scholarly interpretations of Anselm's work in the *CDH*. In each case, the authors have defended Anselm's use of language that critics have attempted to use to confine him to a narrow historical window as a peculiarity of the late 11th century. They have also shown that there are plausible parallels between Anselm's ideas and language and the work of various Biblical and Patristic writers. However, no scholar had published a systematic study of Anselm's work and his possible influences until Giles Gaspar's recent efforts. In work that was published as a paper in 1999 and later incorporated into a book examining Anselm's theological influences, Gaspar has drawn parallels between the motivation, concepts and language of Athanasius of Alexandria and Anselm. In his paper, "Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* and Athanasius's *De Incarnatione*: Some Questions of Comparison,"⁹⁹ Gaspar ignores critics who have explicitly rejected any connection between Athanasius and Anselm and, instead, focuses on broadening the scope of Anselm's influences in the *CDH* beyond mere reliance on Augustine. He argues that "Anselm and Athanasius have a number of comparable interests and attitudes. By focusing on *Cur Deus Homo* and *De Incarnatione*, these areas may be exposed and addressed. Both works may be found worthy of comparison and will hopefully reveal something of the interplay between individual thinker, work and context, and the wider community of theological investigation."¹⁰⁰ Gaspar contends that Anselm and Athanasius share a common point of origin: "For both it comprises the divine truth of

⁹⁹ Giles E. M. Gaspar, "Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* and Athanasius's *De Incarnatione*: Some Questions of Comparison," in *Cur Deus Homo: Atti Del Congresso Anselmiano Internazionale*, ed. Paul Gilbert, Helmut Karl Kohlenberger, and Elmar Salmann, *Studia Anselmiana* (Rome: Centro Studi S. Anselmo, 1999).

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

God, and the possibility of apprehending and knowing God, arising out of the Incarnation of the Word of God. The theology of both Anselm and Athanasius is christologically centred.”¹⁰¹ Though the finer points of Gasper’s comparison will be covered in the following chapters, it is helpful to understand here that Gasper highlights the common approach, method and even language of Athanasius and Anselm in developing a favorable comparison between the two.

The discussion of influences on Anselm must go beyond the examination of his social context and his written works to include some investigation of the sources that may have been at his disposal. Gasper has recently done a thorough study on this matter in his book, *Anselm of Canterbury and his Theological Inheritance*.¹⁰² He has studied the catalogue of the (no longer extant) library at Bec, where Anselm spent his theologically formative years. Working from a 12th-century catalogue found in a collection of historical works at the Mont-St-Michel abbey, he notes that a number of works of Pseudo-Athanasius, John Chrysostom and Origen constituted the heart of the collection of works by the Fathers of the Church in Bec.¹⁰³ Gasper also looks into the details of the catalogue (and sometimes the obvious errors therein) and highlights the possibility that Anselm might have had access to works by Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius and perhaps even Athanasius.¹⁰⁴ This work is enormously useful in counteracting the long-held stereotype that Anselm was little more than a disciple (or worse, a parrot) of Augustine. Gasper points out that Anselm clearly had a broad array of

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 156. Here, Gasper highlights the importance of considering the theologians’ work on the Incarnation and Atonement in the proper, broader context of their overall theological system. Anselm’s language can not be an exception to this and must be contextualized.

¹⁰² ———, *Anselm of Canterbury and His Theological Inheritance* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004).

¹⁰³ Ibid., 92-99 (see particularly Gasper’s table of works on pages 97-99).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 100-105.

sources within his foundational understanding of theology and philosophy: “The context in which Anselm lived and worked was one in which access to Greek Patristic writings was not problematic. His contemporaries used these works and their libraries stocked them.”¹⁰⁵ It would be naïve and unrealistic to suggest that Anselm would have only integrated Augustine into his theological system when he clearly had exposure to so many other Fathers of the Church. Gasper correctly acknowledges, though, that opportunity does not guarantee influence: “There are limits to this exercise; it is not possible to prove the early existence of such texts, and it is important that the titles the catalogue suggests should not prescribe the interpretation of Anselm’s sources. There may have been other sources not recorded on this catalogue.”¹⁰⁶ Without direct attribution from Anselm (as is frequently the case for citations of Augustine), there is no clear case for influence. Still, influence can take many forms – even beyond exposure to written text. As Gasper points out, the picture we have of Anselm is of one who enjoyed verbal communication and conversation: “Contact with ideas and approaches need not have come through the written word, verbal exchange was equally possible and fruitful, especially for one so famed for conversation as Anselm. It would not do to insist on too close a dependence of Anselm on his sources, his was an independent and capable mind.”¹⁰⁷ Just as one ought not to view Anselm as merely a product of his sources, he ought not to be viewed as one who was influenced by only one or a small quantity of sources. Further, the timing of the writing of the *Cur Deus Homo* toward the end of his life would have allowed Anselm to marshal all of his (by that point extensive) influences.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 105.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 105.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 105.

Anselm acknowledges the fact there was a demand for him to produce the work, so it is only fair to assume that he made a good-faith effort to bring all of his philosophical and theological resources to bear on the *CDH*.

Weaver

Lastly, while the work of current scholars sympathetic to Anselm has just been outlined, it is important to note that Anselm is not without critics to this day. The most prominent voice challenging the effectiveness and value of Anselm's approach in the *CDH* is that of J. Denny Weaver. In his book *The Nonviolent Atonement*, Weaver cast Anselm's work as representative of all that has been wrong with Atonement theology and purported connections to and glorification of violence therein. Weaver argues that "even at its best, Anselm's satisfaction theory of atonement cannot escape its foundation in the idea of retributive violence."¹⁰⁸ He admittedly follows Southern for much of his interpretation (and understanding) of the *CDH*¹⁰⁹ and follows the specific point that Anselm was thoroughly feudal, including the terminology he employed: "The language Anselm used in *Cur Deus Homo* to examine God's honor reflects [his] feudal setting."¹¹⁰ While he allows that Anselm's language does not contain the most explicit references to violence among the varieties of satisfaction theory that have appeared over the centuries, he is adamant that the principles to which he (Weaver) objects most strongly found their root in Anselm's work: "Make no mistake about it. Satisfaction atonement *in any form* depends on divinely sanctioned violence that follows from the assumption that doing

¹⁰⁸ Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement*, 11.

¹⁰⁹ He explicitly follows on the work of Aulén and even characterizes his preferred approach as "Narrative Christus Victor." See chapters 2 and 3 of Weaver's book.

¹¹⁰ Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement*, 193.

justice means to punish.”¹¹¹ While I argue later in the present work that Weaver’s interpretation stems from a misreading of Anselm, Weaver’s work has played a prominent role in discussions of the history of atonement theory and it is important to recognize the charges levied against Anselm in the midst of it. Unfortunately, few scholars have risen to Anselm’s defense against Weaver, so I hope to provide some small response (and contextualization of Weaver’s critique) in my response later in this study.

This Study

The trajectory of scholarship concerning Anselm and the *CDH* in the past 15 years has been moving toward the idea that Anselm wrote the *CDH* with a broader perspective than merely his liturgical and feudal social contexts. There has been intentional movement away from the standard textbook criticisms of Anselm and toward comparisons with Patristic and Biblical sources that were previously rejected. The goal of this study is to carry forward the work done by the likes of Hart, Gasper and Rogers in taking seriously the idea that Anselm was writing more in accordance with scripture and tradition than with his contemporary world. In doing so, I would also like to explore the Biblical and Patristic antecedents (if not roots) for the language that Anselm used and argue that his use of terms like “honor,” “justice,” “debt” and “satisfaction” was influenced more by Biblical and Patristic sources than by the social context of feudalism that was “in the air” as the work was composed. In order to do this, I will examine Anselm’s use of the concepts of “honor,” “justice,” “debt” and “satisfaction” in the *CDH* and offer preferred ways to understand their meanings, dedicating a chapter to each concept. Throughout these chapters, I will engage many of the critics named in this

¹¹¹ Ibid., 203.

opening chapter and I will attempt to show the ways in which they properly or improperly interpreted Anselm with regard to the issues at hand. By the end I hope to provide a balanced perspective on Anselm that fully considers objections to the *CDH* and proper responses from an Anselmian perspective. Further, I will incorporate references to Patristic and Biblical sources that would have likely (or, in some cases, certainly) informed Anselm as he wrote the *CDH* in order to show that he was not as far removed from these earlier works as some have contended. I will conclude by offering an interpretation of the *CDH* that takes into account the way I believe Anselm should be understood – an interpretation that engages Anselm as seriously as possible with respect to his own context and intentions for the work.

Chapter 2

Honor

One of the most nuanced terms that Anselm uses in the *Cur Deus Homo* is the word *honor*. The term and its variants (such as *exhonorare*, *inhonorare*, etc.) appear 47 times in the text, primarily in locations where Anselm lays the foundation for his argument that the Incarnation was necessary. Anselm's use of *honor* in this way has been raised as the prime example of the "feudal" imagery found in the *CDH*. R.W. Southern uses *honor* as a case study to stand for all feudal imagery in the *CDH*.¹ George C. Foley, in his thorough critique of Anselm's work in the *CDH*, begins by attacking Anselm's usage of *honor* as the foundation for a misguided, feudal perspective on the atonement.² It is the purpose of this chapter to re-characterize Anselm's use of *honor* from a negative, feudal characterization to a positive, deeply-considered one that reflects the tradition of theology inherited by Anselm.

Anselm and Honor

In Anselm's view, all beings have an *honor* that reflects their essence. This honor is fundamental to the nature of a being and is conveyed through words and actions. God's *honor* is perfectly maintained in harmony with His omnipotence, omniscience, eternity, etc. He affirms this in agreement with his non-Christian, monotheistic audience:

¹ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 225-227.

² George Cadwalader Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 147-153.

“*Divinam enim naturam absque dubio asserimus impassibilem, nec ullatenus posse a sua celsitudine humiliari, nec in eo quod facere vult laborare.*”³ Although he immediately follows up this statement with the Christian assertion that the alleged “*humilia*” of the Incarnation applied only to the humanity of Christ, Anselm is careful to be consistent with his assertions concerning the supreme nature of God that he made in other works (most notably in the *Monologion*).⁴ He is keenly aware of the central problem that the divinity of God seems inconsistent with the human experiences of Jesus Christ. Even after assigning weakness to the humanity of Christ (rather than the divinity of Christ), Anselm feels compelled to make it explicit with Boso that “*nullum vel minimum inconueniens in deo a nobis accipitur.*”⁵ Just as no inappropriateness or deficiency (my understanding of *inconueniens*) in God was to be considered, consequently, God must be considered to be perfect in whatever He is.⁶ *Honor* is a significant factor in this consideration: if God’s *honor* is violated in any way, His omnipotence, omniscience, etc. is also besmirched. Thus, Anselm takes the *honor* of God as seriously as the nature and essence of God.

Honor also reflects the relationships between beings. In any given relationship, one party honors (or dishonors) the other based on the degree to which their actions are appropriate with respect to the other party’s being. In the relationship between God and human beings, the *honor* relationship is defined by the Creator/creation dynamic. God has a certain *honor* as the Creator and humans’ relationship to God is defined by the fact

³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938), *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 59).

⁴ See *Monologion* chapters 15-17.

⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 10 (II, 67).

⁶ Again, consistent with his description of God in the *Monologion*.

that they are not only created beings but also were created by the God with whom they are in relationship. The activities of all humans are indelibly tied to the fact that humans are the creation of God. God did not create human beings randomly, but with a purpose. For Anselm, the most basic purpose for the creation of human beings was to bring *honor* to God who created them. Further, Anselm viewed the creation of humanity as God's plan to replace the fallen angels in heaven. While it is never explained at what later point humans would actually replace the fallen angels in heaven, the assumption is clear that humans were to demonstrate lives of obedience to God in stark contrast to the rebellion of the fallen angels.

The plan that God intended for humanity to fulfill was jeopardized by the sin of humanity. Adam's original sin marked the beginning of a failure to render *honor* to God that has plagued humanity ever since. Adam's sin affected not only himself, but also all other humans because, collectively, humanity failed to maintain the *status quo* of the relationship with God. This leads to a situation in which there is both a corporate obligation to render *honor* and individual obligation to render *honor* to God. In order for the situation to be rectified, there needs to be both corporate and individual satisfaction of the *honor* of God.

Anselm undertakes a detailed explanation of the *honor* relationship in the context of sin. He argues that sin is merely the failure on the part of a creature to give to God what is owed to God. For Anselm, *omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei*.⁷ It is clear that Anselm views honor in the light of both activity and attitude of human beings. This *voluntas* is *rectitudo voluntatis* and is therefore a choice

⁷Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

made by human beings as creatures. It is “willing done rightly” just as much as it is “uprightness of the will.” Anselm, as a believer in libertarian freedom, places the activity of willing squarely in the realm of human beings as independent, free agents. It is something that humans freely choose and so, when they do right or not, humans can be held accountable and judged based on their actions. Anselm continues by arguing that *hic est solus et totus honor, quem debemus deo et a nobis exigit deus*.⁸ This uprightness of will is the sole obligation of humanity to God. Similarly, it is a necessary feature of any activity that is pleasing to God: *nullum opus sine illa placet*.⁹ This *voluntas* is both necessary and sufficient for fulfilling a human’s obligation to God and for pleasing God. Conversely, when this *voluntas* is lacking, it constitutes a failure to honor God and thus, is sin.

Although Anselm does not seem to operate from a clear scriptural basis in his discussion of *honor* and sin, the idea that humanity owes something to God that is disrupted by sin is clearly present in the Bible. David Brown has suggested that the frequent biblical connection between glory and *honor* can shed some light on a scriptural background for Anselm’s use of *honor*:

Although many, if asked, might well declare ‘honor’ not to be a biblical word, this misleading impression is created only because so often its use is yoked with others, especially ‘glory.’ So, significantly, God is repeatedly offered ‘glory and honor’ in the worship of heaven, and that is also seen as an appropriate ascription to God here on earth. More puzzlingly, it is not inconceivable that Paul may have thought ‘honor’ a legitimate human aspiration also.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

⁹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

¹⁰ David Brown, “Anselm on Atonement,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Anselm*, ed. Brian Davies and Brian Leftow, *Cambridge Companions to Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 294.

Paul's assessment of the state of sinful humanity in Romans 3:23 ("*omnes enim peccaverunt et egent gloriam Dei*") seems to have clearly influenced Anselm. Sin (and its presence in all humans) has caused a separation between humanity and God. Paul characterizes this as a failure to attain to or a privation of the glory of God and it seems that, in light of Brown's suggestion, "*honorem*" could just as easily be inserted into this passage in place of "*gloriam*." Anselm seems to be on firm (although perhaps narrow) scriptural ground for his assertion that sin is a failure to render *honor* to God.

The way that human beings honor God is more than simply a matter of the will, though. Later on, Anselm states more broadly that *quando unaquaeque creatura suum et quasi sibi praeceptum ordinem sive naturaliter sive rationabiliter servat, deo oboedire et eum honorare dicitur, et hoc maxime rationalis natura, cui datum est intelligere quid debeat*.¹¹ The *honor* of God is a function of the proper maintenance of the order of creation. For Anselm, humans have both a special ability and responsibility within this order. As rational creatures, humans have the ability either to knowingly maintain their place in the order of things or to disrupt it. This distinguishes human beings (and human actions) from those of the rest of creation. Put clearly, *quae cum vult quod debet, deum honorat; non quia illi aliquid confert, sed quia sponte se eius voluntati et dispositioni subdit, et in rerum universitate ordinem suum et eiusdem universitatis pulchritudinem, quantum in ipsa est, servat*.¹² Whereas the actions of other creatures do not affect their standing before God, human actions determine whether or not they have properly submitted themselves to God. Uprightness of will is as much about God as it is about humans.

¹¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 72-73).

¹² *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 72-73).

Having connected *honor* to *ordo*, Anselm makes a crucial argument that the order of creation remains undisturbed, regardless of human sin. Even though it may seem like human sin has violated the order of creation, Anselm argues that at no time is the order of creation ever actually breached. For him, *potestatem aut dignitatem dei nullatenus laedat aut decoloret*.¹³ Rather, God has ordered the universe in a way that for every such apparent breach of order, one of two counter-balancing events occur: either voluntary recompense is made, or punishment is exacted (*spontanea satisfactio vel a non satisfaciente poenae exactio*).¹⁴ Anselm argues that otherwise, *sibi deus ipsi iustus non erit aut ad utrumque impotens erit; quod nefas est vel cogitare*.¹⁵ Since God can not violate His own will or order, justice demands that there always be an even balance, a zero-sum game of the order of the universe. Anselm uniquely argues that this balance is not accomplished through a ledger book of wrong and right, or disorder that is later corrected, but rather that the balance is eternally maintained via God's will. Recompense or punishment necessarily accompanies any "disruption" of order. In that sense, there is really never any "disruption" at all. Rather, God eternally balances out the instances in which humans create disorder.

At this point, Anselm moves on from the issue of *honor* to questions of justice, owing a debt, and, finally, satisfaction. These issues will all be taken up in later chapters of this work, so the task remains in this part to further explicate Anselm's understanding and use of "*honor*." Anselm has three primary concerns relating to *honor*:

- 1) The honor of God is inherently tied to the essence of God.

¹³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

¹⁴ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

¹⁵ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71).

- 2) The honor of God is inherently tied to His relationship with creation as Creator.
- 3) The honor of God is eternally maintained so that any apparent breach or besmirching of God's honor by creation is presently and immediately accompanied by punishment or recompense.

These concerns will guide the foregoing discussion of *honor* both for Anselm, his interpreters and others who deal with this issue. Anselm's approach has been laid out already, so the remaining portion will deal with his interpreters and other sources to be brought into conversation with Anselm.

Critics of Anselm on Honor

Foley wrote a detailed critique of the *CDH* in his book *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* in 1909. In this work, Foley builds on the 19th-century textbook criticisms of Anselm¹⁶ and points out three "defects" of Anselm's theory: 1) it is not based in scripture, 2) it is not logically sound, and 3) it is "external and institutional" and fails to account for the personal nature of Christianity.¹⁷ Foley makes his case by analyzing Anselm's theory step-by-step and has a great deal to say about *honor* throughout the work. He focuses on Anselm's usage of *honor* as it relates to sin and describes the offense of humanity as "defrauding the suzerain of a vassal's service" and reparation as "the soothing of a feeling of impaired official prestige."¹⁸ He characterizes Anselm's understanding of *honor* as "derived from the institution of feudalism" and focuses on a personal and anthropomorphic understanding of honor.¹⁹ In this way, he deals with the second of Anselm's concerns for *honor* (the relationship between God and humanity). Finally, he accuses Anselm of inconsistency with regard to the loss and restoration of

¹⁶ Such as those of Harnack and Ritschl.

¹⁷ Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement*, 143-147.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 148.

honor. He contends that the “loss of God’s honour is the basis of his whole reasoning; but he admits that God can suffer no objective loss of this kind.”²⁰ Here, Foley either misunderstands or disagrees with Anselm’s third concern for the balance of God’s *honor*. He references the possibility that Anselm could be talking about two different types of *honor* (“essential honor” that is internal and cannot be violated and “exterior honor” that is affected by creation, humans, etc.), but this does not seem to have any basis in Anselm’s text. He concludes that Anselm obviously contradicts himself and pronounces that “the argument, notwithstanding all its acuteness, is utterly vitiated by this contradiction.”²¹

R.W. Southern takes a more objective, if not friendlier, approach to Anselm’s use of honor in his book *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*.²² In a broad sense, Southern argued that the *CDH* “was the product of a feudal and monastic world on the eve of a great transformation” and that “it bears the marks of this rigorous and – if the word can be used without blame – repressive regime.”²³ Southern chose *honor* as the prime example of the way that the *CDH* reflected the feudal world in which Anselm wrote. He translates *honor* as “due honour” and takes a further step in explaining that “it is equated with the well-known secular *servitium debitum*: it is capable of being paid, withdrawn, restored.”²⁴ After quoting a passage from the *CDH*, he argues that the language “could scarcely be more feudal, and the thought it expresses is only intelligible

²⁰ Ibid., 152.

²¹ Ibid., 152.

²² Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*, primarily the section “Feudal Imagery and Universal Order” found at pp. 221-227.

²³ Ibid., 222.

²⁴ Ibid., 225.

if the language is understood in a strictly contemporary sense.”²⁵ Not only does Southern believe that Anselm’s use of *honor* should only be understood in his feudal context, he argues that Anselm’s use is also distinct from those who came before him and from those who followed:

The solidity of his concept of honour, its minute gradations and equivalents, and its reiteration at the most important moments of his argument, all suggest a social and ideological background quite different from our own or from that of St Augustine or St Thomas Aquinas. This background, which sets Anselm as far apart from Patristic as from modern, or even later medieval thought, is the complex of feudal relationships.²⁶

This assessment of the *CDH* by Southern and the case of *honor* in particular has had an enormous impact on later scholarly work concerning the *CDH*. The idea that Anselm took a perspective that was different from the better-known perspectives of Augustine (and, by extension, other Patristic writers), Aquinas (and other Medieval writers) and the contemporary world is common among many who interpret Anselm, whether they do so in philosophical, theological or historical contexts. It is not unreasonable to suggest that Southern, as one of the premier scholars of Anselm, may have strongly contributed to making this negative attitude commonplace.

Athanasius’ Use of Image as Analogue for Anselm and Honor

The purpose of the remainder of this chapter is to re-interpret the way that Anselm used *honor* in the *Cur Deus Homo* by bringing his work into conversation with the corresponding work of a theologian whom Foley and Southern (and others) would consider to be utterly distinct: the *De Incarnatione (DI)* of Athanasius of Alexandria. Even though some recent scholars have explicitly rejected any possible correlation

²⁵ Ibid., 225.

²⁶ Ibid., 225.

between the works of Athanasius and Anselm, others have begun to notice similarities of approach and language.²⁷ I do not wish to argue for any influence of Athanasius on Anselm,²⁸ but I think the point can be made quite clearly and strongly that they took remarkably similar tactics in their arguments for the necessity of the Incarnation. With regard to the topic under consideration in this chapter, Anselm's use of *honor*, I would like to draw a comparison to Athanasius' use of *image* (εἰκὼν).

Athanasius' overarching concern in the *DI* was very similar to Anselm's in the *CDH*: an apologetic investigation into the logic of the Incarnation in the face of non-Christian objections that a fleshly/human appearance is incompatible with divinity. Athanasius sets the scope of his own work to be to "tell of the incarnation of the Word and expound his divine manifestation to us, which the Jews slander and the Greeks mock, but which we ourselves adore, so that from the apparent degradation of the Word you may have ever greater and stronger piety towards him."²⁹ Athanasius felt the burden of explaining all aspects of the Incarnation in language and terminology that was accessible to educated, non-Christian critics. As Khaled Anatolios has pointed out, the *DI* (along with its' companion work the *Contra Gentes* (*CG*)) "is first and foremost an *apologia crucis*."³⁰ Athanasius also builds up his argument by starting with concepts shared among Christians and non-Christians alike (creation and sin) and attempts to show that the Incarnation was a necessary result. For both Anselm and Athanasius, the key

²⁷ Some examples include David Bentley Hart, Kevin McMahon and Giles E.M. Gasper. Please see Bibliography for exact citations.

²⁸ As mentioned in the previous chapter, Gasper has examined this issue thoroughly in his book *Anselm of Canterbury and his Theological Inheritance*. While it is difficult, if not impossible, to suggest that Anselm knew any genuine work of Athanasius, there are other possible connections that will be explored later in this work.

²⁹ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Robert W. Thomson, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 135 (*DI* 1).

³⁰ Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought* (London: Routledge, 1998), 28.

rationale for the necessity of the Incarnation is that the original state of creation (specifically humanity) is in need of restoration. The focus, then, is on the relationship between God and humanity as Creator and creation. For Anselm, this relationship is defined by the idea of *honor*. *Honor*, as both defenders and critics of Anselm agree, stands for the order of creation. For Athanasius, humans were created in the *image* of God and this defines the relationship between God and humanity. It remains to be seen, then, how Anselm and Athanasius use *honor* and *image* in parallel ways and contexts.

The idea of *image* certainly has a stronger Biblical foundation for use in describing the relationship between God and humanity than does *honor*. Genesis describes the creation by God of humans κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ – in the *image* of God. This theme is echoed in further passages to value humanity's privileged status as the *image* of God,³¹ decry the worship of idols in place of God,³² and affirm Christ as the *image* of God (after whose *image* humans were created).³³ The idea of *image* is also found in the Platonism and Neo-Platonism that had such a strong influence on many early Christian theologians. Plato used the word εἰκών frequently in the *Republic* in discussing reflections (visible and invisible) of forms.

Athanasius, himself strongly influenced by the Platonism and Neo-Platonism of the Alexandrian schools, places this idea at the center of his argument in the *DI*. He first asserts that God created everything “from nothing through his own Word, our Lord Jesus Christ.”³⁴ The idea of creation through a mediating Λόγος was a concept that Athanasius would have shared with the Jews and Greeks with whom he found himself in

³¹ See, for example, Genesis 9:6.

³² See, for example, Romans 1:23.

³³ See, for example, 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:15.

³⁴ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*., 141 (*DI* 3).

conversation. The identification of this Λόγος with Jesus Christ (whereas Jews might identify it with the feminine *Wisdom* of Proverbs) was Athanasius' particularly Christian move. He then explains that, in creation, God gave humanity "an added grace, not simply creating men like all irrational animals on the earth, but making them in his own image and giving them also a share in the power of his own Word, so that having as it were shadows of the Word and being made rational, they might be able to remain in felicity and live the true life in paradise, which is really that of the saints."³⁵ Humans, then, were originally created in the *image* of the Word, who Himself, for Athanasius, was the *Image* of God (as we have seen earlier – *n.* 33). The next step is to explain sin and the consequences thereof:

God, then, had so created man and willed that he should remain in incorruptibility. But when man had disregarded and turned away from the understanding of God, and had thought of and invented for themselves wickedness, as was said in the first part, then they received the condemnation of death which had previously been threatened, and no longer remained as they had been created, but as they had devised, were ruined.³⁶

The state of sin was entirely avoidable – sinful humanity was “devised” and not “created.” The will of God in creation was stymied by the sinful actions of humans who had the power to choose to follow God. Athanasius makes it clear that even though humans were created “corruptible” like all creatures, participation in the *image* of the Word meant that corruption was not inevitable: “by the grace of the participation of the Word they could have escaped from the consequences of their nature if they had remained virtuous.”³⁷ So, humans were responsible for the corruption that came upon

³⁵ Ibid., 141 (*DI* 3).

³⁶ Ibid., 143 (*DI* 4).

³⁷ Ibid., 145 (*DI* 5).

them, but the nature of the *image* relationship between God and humans was such that the corruption (and corresponding death, due to the law of God) of creation marked an unacceptable blot on the handiwork of the Creator.

For God would not have been truthful, if after he had said we would die, man had not died. And furthermore, it would have been improper that what had once been created rational and had partaken of his Word, should perish and return again to non-existence through corruption. For it would not have been worthy of the goodness of God that what had been brought into existence by him should be corrupted on account of the deceit which the devil had played on men. And it would have been especially improper that the handiwork of God in mankind should come to nought, either through their neglect, or through the deceit of demons.³⁸

The goodness of God is key for Athanasius, since he considers how “good” God would appear if the circumstances were viewed objectively. If God were to stand by and simply allow corruption and death to rule creation by His neglect to intercede, “the weakness of God rather than his goodness would be made known, if after creating he had abandoned his work to corruption...”³⁹

Athanasius characterizes the situation as a conflict between the divine law that meant death for sin and the need for humanity to remain uncorrupted so that God’s goodness would not be compromised. He finds himself at the same position as Anselm at the end of chapter 13 of the first book of the *CDH*. The choice between the law and goodness of God is strikingly similar to Anselm’s struggle between maintaining the *honor* and omnipotence of God. At this point, Athanasius takes up a key question that Anselm also considers at this stage of his argument: whether mere repentance might relieve humanity from corruption and death. Athanasius’ answer is that the problem lies not so much with sin, but with the effect that sin had in bringing corruption on humanity:

³⁸ Ibid., 149 (*DI* 6).

³⁹ Ibid., 149 (*DI* 6).

“If...there had been only sin and not its consequence of corruption, repentance would have been very well. But if, since transgression had overtaken them, men were now prisoners to natural corruption, and they had been deprived of the grace of being in the image, what else should have happened?”⁴⁰ Repentance alone could not restore humanity from corruption to incorruption and only the creator could restore the *image* in creation.

Having excluded the possibility of human repentance in providing for the salvation of humanity, Athanasius makes an extended argument and offers multiple variants in explaining how the Incarnation of the Word is the answer. His immediate explanation is the following:

For since the Word realized that the corruption of men would not be abolished in any other way except by everyone dying – but the Word was not able to die, being immortal and the Son of the Father – therefore he took to himself a body which could die, in order that, since this participated in the Word who is above all, it might suffice for death on behalf of all, and because of the Word who was dwelling in it, it might remain corruptible, and so corruption might cease from all men by the grace of the resurrection.⁴¹

The language of “participation” here is evocative of the earlier ways in which Athanasius discussed the way that humanity was created in the *image* of God. However, he makes the connection explicit in one of the later passages in which he offers alternative ways to explain the rationale for the necessity of the Incarnation.

What then was God to do, or what should have happened, except that he should renew again that which was in his *image*, in order that through it men might be able once more to know him? But how could this have been done, unless the very *image* of God were to come, our Saviour Jesus Christ? For neither by men was it possible, since they had been created in the *image*, nor by the angels, for neither were they images. So the Word

⁴⁰ Ibid., 151 (*DI* 7).

⁴¹ Ibid., 153-155 (*DI* 9).

of God came in his own person, in order that, as he is the *image* of his Father, he might be able to restore man who is in the *image*. In any other way it could not have been done, without the destruction of death and corruption. So he was justified in taking a mortal body, in order that in it death could be destroyed and men might be again renewed in the *image*. For this, then, none other than the *image* of the Father was required.⁴²

Athanasius here argues emphatically that the *image* of the Word must have been renewed in humanity by the coming of the Word Himself. He comes to the same conclusion that only by the Incarnation of the Word was a necessary and sufficient cause available to provide for the salvation of humanity. What is striking is that he makes his point to a similar audience, with similar certainty and by a similar argument.

Image and Honor in the Incarnation

In comparing Anselm's use of *honor* with Athanasius' use of *image*, let us return to Anselm's three primary concerns relating to *honor*: *honor* is 1) inherently tied to the essence of God, 2) inherently tied to God's relationship with creation as Creator, and 3) presently and immediately accompanied by punishment or recompense if it ever seems to be compromised. Some of these concerns have been hinted at already in the discussion of Athanasius' use of *image*, but it is important to make them clear. For this, Anatolios' work on Athanasius will be helpful.

First, the inherent connection between the *image* and essence of God should be obvious. As the *image* of God, humans reflect (in as many ways as physically possible) the essence of God. Athanasius relies on the scriptural identification of the Word, Jesus Christ, as the *Image* of God. As Anatolios points out, this is fundamentally connected to Athanasius' Trinitarian theology:

⁴² Ibid., 165-167 (DI 13) – emphasis mine.

Humanity, therefore, is the ‘image of the image.’ Its similarity to God is thus fundamentally articulated as a participation in the Son’s archetypal relationship of similitude to the Father. This point alerts us to the Trinitarian background of Athanasius’s anthropology. It also provides us with a fundamental insight into the logic whereby Athanasius asserts that only the true Image can renew the impaired or lost image within us. That is because our being in the image of God is derivative from (i.e., a participation in) the natural (i.e., unparticipated, substantial) similitude of the Son to the Father.⁴³

Image, as Athanasius uses it, refers both to the relationship between humans and God and to the relationship between the Son and the Father. It is as fundamental to the essence of God for Athanasius as God’s goodness, grace, power, etc. This is a cornerstone of Athanasius’ apologetic strategy, in the words of Anatolios: “Athanasius wants to show that the fact of the incarnation is consistent with who God is, and with God’s general way of relating to creation from the beginning.”⁴⁴ The essence of God includes the Word as *Image* and this is only made clearer in the discussion of the next point.

The concern for an inherent tie between the idea of *image* and God’s relationship with creation as Creator is a point that Athanasius makes on numerous occasions. The essence of God includes the idea of *image* and this naturally extends to creation, in the way that God is just as essentially “creator” as He is good, powerful, etc. As Anatolios puts it, “God is beyond all created being, as uncreated, but his nearness to creation has its basis also in his very nature, as supremely good and loving. In the self-same movement of creation, God asserts his transcendence over that which he brings into existence from nothing, as well as demonstrating his love which leads him to generously grant existence to what was not.”⁴⁵ Creation, then, flows naturally from God’s essence. For Athanasius,

⁴³ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought*, 56.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.

God could not ignore the corruption and death of His creation since “this was neither proper nor fitting for the goodness of God.”⁴⁶ The problem was not simply a desire that humanity not be destroyed, but that what was created in His *image* (“what had once been created rational and had partaken of his Word”⁴⁷) should not be destroyed. Athanasius makes it clear that humanity was unique by virtue of having been created in the *image* of God.⁴⁸ This unique situation prompted the renewal of the *image* in humanity to be performed in a way similar to the original act of creation. Just as humans were created by the activity of the Word, so also the re-creation of humanity was effected by the Word: “...it is necessary for him whose portrait it is to come again so that the picture can be renewed in the same material – for because of his portrait the material on which it is painted is not thrown away, but the portrait is redone on it...”⁴⁹ The original *image* was renewed in the same “material” by the One who was both *Image* and Creator. Thus, the idea of *image* is key to Athanasius’ theology of creation and of the Incarnation as a renewal of creation.

The third and final concern is the necessary accompaniment of a response to the disruption of the *image* in creation. As noted earlier, Anselm has faced criticism from Foley and his followers for his position that God faces the loss of *honor* without ever actually losing it, since that would be impossible for God. Foley argued that this was a contradiction to base an entire argument on sin causing humanity to fail to *honor* God and yet maintain that God could never actually suffer any loss of *honor*. As Anatolios explains, Athanasius is in a similar position with regard to the *image* of God in the *DI*.

⁴⁶ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*., 149 (*DI* 6).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 149 (*DI* 6).

⁴⁸ See *DI* 13.

⁴⁹ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*., 167 (*DI* 14).

Anatolios contrasts that Athanasius, on the one hand, argues that “nothing short of the incarnation of God could renew” the relationship between humans and God and, on the other hand, “the whole dramatic movement of the *De Incarnatione*, in which the incarnation takes place at the penultimate moment before humanity’s utter demise.”⁵⁰ The dramatic tension that Athanasius builds up in detailing how corrupted the *image* of God became in humanity only to be renewed in the Incarnation is paralleled by Anselm’s explanation of “how heavy the weight of sin is” and yet, at the same time, how sin can never actually affect God’s *honor* since it is eternally maintained, just like any other divine perfection. Just as the natural consequences of human corruption (the demise of humanity) were never felt by Athanasius’ reckoning, so also the natural consequences of dishonoring God (punishment [death] equal to the offense) were replaced in Anselm’s system by recompense. For both, the mere potential for human destruction was enough to justify the Incarnation.

It seems, therefore, that Anselm and Athanasius share the same concerns in the way that they approached the rationale of the Incarnation. Anselm’s use of *honor* and Athanasius’ use of *image* allow the respective authors to describe how the essence of God and the need for a counter-balance to sin all work together to compel a rational audience to agree that the Incarnation was a necessary solution to the problem of human sin. However, it is more than shared concerns that join Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* and Athanasius’ *De Incarnatione*. As noted above, critics have seized upon Anselm’s use of *honor* as indicative of the feudal context for his writings, which they view as a negative characteristic of Anselm’s work. I would like to argue that the particular use of *honor*

⁵⁰ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought*, 66.

that is so often criticized can also be seen in Athanasius' use of *image*. In doing so, I hope to show that Anselm's use of *honor* is not so imbedded in a feudal context that it cannot be seen to have redeeming, universally applicable theological value. There are two characteristics of feudalism that are associated with Anselm's use of *honor* that I wish to show to be found also in Athanasius' use of *image*: ordered hierarchy and service by humans to God.

Southern pointed out the important role that hierarchy played in Anselm's understanding of *honor*. For Southern, Anselm's understanding of *honor* is very closely linked to the idea of one's "estate," in which Southern includes one's "due place in the hierarchy of authority, his family background, and his personal honour."⁵¹ Southern goes on to explain that obedience is linked to the preservation of hierarchy and order, whereas disobedience (sin, in the particular case of the *CDH*) damages and even destroys the order of things. According to Southern, Anselm "valued hierarchy as an expression of the rule of reason."⁵² In this ordered hierarchy that Anselm valued so much, God as the Creator of all stands at the top of the hierarchy and all of creation is beneath Him. In disobedience, "a man is guilty of attempting to put himself in the place of the Creator. He fails; but in making this attempt, he excludes himself from, and to the extent of his power destroys, the order and beauty of the universe."⁵³ God's *honor* is unmistakably linked to the order and hierarchy of the universe.

Athanasius, too, gives high value to the ordered hierarchy of the universe, as ordained by God. However, as Anatolios points out so well, Athanasius emphasized the

⁵¹ Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*, 225.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 227.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 226.

transcendence, incorruption and supremacy of God as Creator in order to demonstrate the magnitude of God's goodness in the Incarnation. Anatolios argues that the transcendent Creator and the Word Incarnate both consistently reflect the nature of God: "God is beyond all created being, as uncreated, but his nearness to creation has its basis also in his very nature, as supremely good and loving. In the self-same movement of creation, God asserts his transcendence over that which he brings into existence from nothing, as well as demonstrating his love which leads him to generously grant existence to what was not."⁵⁴ Athanasius works through this himself, as described above, when he weighs the destruction of humanity due to the law of death against the goodness of God. On the one hand, God had ordained in His law the punishment of death for disobedience and sin, since corruption of His *image* in humanity was an affront to Him. In the face of human sin, God the Creator and transcendent ruler of all, must respond to this, and death was the fore-ordained response. Athanasius emphasizes that this was most fitting in regard to the nature of God: "it would have been absurd that for our benefit and permanence God, the Father of truth, should appear a liar."⁵⁵ On the other hand, the elimination of humanity as creation and those whom God ruled would have improperly altered the hierarchy of things by removing humans: "it would have been improper that what had once been created rational and had partaken of his Word, should perish and return again to non-existence through corruption."⁵⁶

Athanasius makes a clear distinction between God who is Creator and uncreated and everything else, which is created out of nothing. As Anatolios points out, though, "it

⁵⁴ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought.*, 41.

⁵⁵ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione.*, 149 (DI 7).

⁵⁶ Ibid., 149 (DI 6).

is the relation between God and specifically humanity that is most important for Athanasius, and which he believes is of primary significance in the objective order of things.”⁵⁷ It is due to the fact that God imbued humanity with His *image* that humans occupied this privileged status compared to the rest of creation:

For God, the creator of the universe and king of all, who is beyond all being and human thought, since he is good and bountiful, has made mankind in his own image through his own Word, our Saviour Jesus Christ; and he also made man perceptive and understanding of reality through his similarity to him, giving him also a conception and knowledge of his own eternity, so that as long as he kept this likeness he might never abandon his concept of God or leave the company of the saints, but retaining the grace of him who bestowed it on him, and also the special power given him by the Father’s Word, he might rejoice and converse with God, living an idyllic and truly blessed and immortal life. For having no obstacle to the knowledge of the divine, he continuously contemplates by his purity the image of the Father, God the Word, in whose image he was made, and is filled with admiration when he grasps his providence towards the universe.⁵⁸

Humans were ordained to remain in contemplation of God, by virtue of having been created in the image of God. This was the place of humans within the order that God had created. However, as Anatolios makes clear, Athanasius explains the disruption of that order in light of the fact that “humanity had failed to ‘remain’ within the original structure of the relationship with God and had turned to the non-being of evil.”⁵⁹ This emphasis on “remaining” by Athanasius can be clearly linked to the role of human “obedience” in the ordered hierarchy that was a part of Anselm’s use of *honor*. In both cases, human rebellion against the role ordained for them by God caused a disruption in the order of creation. For Anselm, this necessitated a repair to the *honor* of God where for Athanasius this necessitated a repair to the *image* of God.

⁵⁷ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought*., 32.

⁵⁸ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*., 7 (CG 2).

⁵⁹ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought*., 35.

A further point of comparison between Anselm and Athanasius is the nature of human activity with relation to God. For both, God created humans in a special place within the hierarchy of the universe, enabling them to play an active role in maintaining the order of things through choices and actions of their free will. These actions reflect not only the privileged state of humanity in comparison to the rest of creation, but also the subordinate position of humans to God. It is the latter part that has drawn criticism for Anselm and it will be useful to see how the same subject is handled by Athanasius.

Southern explored this issue as part of his examination of what God's *honor* meant to Anselm. In Southern's account, "God's honour is the complex of service and worship which the whole Creation, animate and inanimate, in Heaven and earth, owes to the Creator, and which preserves everything in its due place."⁶⁰ As mentioned above, Anselm's understanding of human obligations with regard to the *honor* of God is that "*omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei*."⁶¹ Anselm views this as the particular obligation of "angel and human," apart from the rest of creation.⁶² Much of the criticism of this position stems from analyses like that of Southern, who compares this human obligation to the feudal *servitium debitum*.⁶³ This was an integral part of feudal society in which service (commonly represented by military service) was owed by vassals to lords. A lord's *honor* was directly related to the degree to which he received this *servitium debitum* from his subjects.

As mentioned above, the creation of humans in the *image* of God is what set humanity apart from the rest of creation for Athanasius. Just as uprightness of will is

⁶⁰ Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*., 226.

⁶¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*., CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

⁶² Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

⁶³ Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape*., 225.

required of humans in Anselm's system, Athanasius describes the situation that God provided for humans to maintain their privileged status:

Furthermore, knowing that men's faculty of free will could turn either way, he first secured the grace they had been given by imposing a law and a set place. For he brought them into his paradise and gave them a law, so that if they kept the grace and remained good they would enjoy the life of paradise, without sorrow, pain, or care, in addition to their having the promise of immortality in heaven.⁶⁴

The responsibility of humans was to not turn away from the grace that had been given them (having been created rational and in the *image* of God) and to follow the law that had been given by God. Anatolios characterizes this distinction as one between humans who actively receive divine grace and other creatures that merely receive it passively. This active reception is tied to the fact that humans were created in the *image* and likeness of God:

Athanasius describes humanity as not only protected and maintained by the Word, but also as charged with the task of consciously assenting and clinging to this protection and maintenance. Thus, the 'added grace' bestowed upon humanity comes with the condition that humanity itself maintains its accessibility to this grace. Its 'likeness' to God is simultaneous with the vocation to strive to retain that likeness...⁶⁵

Thus, there is a direct and active involvement by humans in maintaining the *image* that God placed in humanity. This activity is the responsibility incumbent upon humans to maintain the relationship with God, much like humans are responsible to God for obedience in Anselm's system.

Shared Approach Among Anselm and Athanasius

Having compared Anselm's *honor* with Athanasius' *image*, I would like to draw out a shared approach to the rationale for the Incarnation that can be explicitly applied to

⁶⁴ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione.*, 141 (DI 3).

⁶⁵ Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought.*, 59.

Anselm's use of *honor* in order to argue that his work should not wholly be confined to the feudal social context in which he lived. For both, the order of creation flows from the nature of God as Creator. Humans occupy a privileged place within that order in that they are given the gift of rationality. This rationality comes with the attendant responsibility to actively maintain a life of obedience to God. When this order of creation was violated by sin, it was God's nature as perfect Creator and lover of creation that was the driving force behind the Incarnation as a means of restoring the order of the universe as it was originally created. Only God as creator could accomplish this act of restoration because it involved a re-creation on the magnitude of the original creation and only God is capable of this. The remainder of this chapter will focus on showing how Anselm's use of *honor* fits this abstracted approach.

First, Anselm's definition of the way that humans *honor* God (*omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei*)⁶⁶ should be understood as the way that rational creatures actively maintain a life of obedience to God. Although the language is that of "being subject," it can and should be understood as obedience within the context of a human's station in the order of the universe. Anselm makes this clearer later on: "*Verum quando unaquaeque creatura suum et quasi sibi praeceptum ordinem sive naturaliter sive rationabiliter servat, deo oboedire et eum honorare dicitur.*"⁶⁷ Here, obedience and maintaining one's place in the universal order is equated with *honoring* God. Further, this occurs within the context of the Creator-creation relationship for Anselm, since he refers to humans here as "*creatura*."

⁶⁶ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 72-73).

When a human sins, Anselm makes it clear that “*deum, quantum ad illam pertinet, inhonorat, quoniam non se sponte subdit illius dispositioni, et universitatis ordinem et pulchritudinem, quantum in se est, perturbat...*”⁶⁸ Sin is a disruption of the order (and beauty) of the universe. It may be an offense or an affront to God, but the ultimate impact of sin is upon the order of creation. Within that order, though, are built-in counter-balances to the disruption of sin: “*perversitatis spontanea satisfactio vel a non satisfaciente poenae exactio.*”⁶⁹ These counter-balances (punishment or satisfaction for sin) are applied eternally, in Anselm’s view. Thus, a sin may appear to disrupt the order of creation within the context of time, but all sins are counter-balanced from God’s eternal perspective. The purpose of the Incarnation was to provide the satisfaction for sin so that punishment equal to the sin would not be meted out upon humanity. As Anselm makes clear, such punishment would result in the destruction of humanity. The Incarnation avoided the destruction of humanity while at the same time it upheld the order of creation, since satisfaction for sin was provided. The fact that God allowed for satisfaction instead of punishment indicates the divine love for creation.

Anselm viewed God’s original act of creation as being of the utmost weight and importance. It was a reflection of God’s nature as Creator. No created being has this nature in the perfect way that God does, so it is impossible for any other being to rectify the order of creation in the way that was needed. Only God could bring to bear the positive creative force to counter the destructive force of sin. Whereas Anselm spends a great deal of time in explaining the extent of human sin and the accompanying negative impact on the honor of God, Athanasius is more eager to explain how God’s goodness

⁶⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

⁶⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

met and overcame the destructive force of human sin. This is the great accomplishment of Athanasius by comparison to Anselm. However, reading Anselm with the Athanasian approach in mind allows one to see that Anselm, too, has a place for the goodness and love of God when considering the *honor* of God.

The convergence of the love and *honor* of God in the *CDH* is most clear in chapter 11 of the second book when Anselm discusses the self-giving of the God-man. For Anselm, the God-man, having been born of a virgin and lived a sin-free life, is the only human being who did not individually dishonor God.⁷⁰ Thus, even though the God-man owes lifelong obedience to God as a human, the God-man would never need to die, since human death is only a result of human sin and corruption. According to Anselm's understanding of *honor*, the God-man has fully *honored* God in His life and has not participated in the *dishonor* of God that is attendant with all other humans as a result of corporate and individual sin. So, the death of the God-man is a complete reversal of the system of *honor* as Anselm has described it. The God-man who is perfectly obedient is not subject to punishment and needs no satisfaction. Human death is regarded as the ultimate punishment for disruption of the order of creation and that is exactly what the God-man uses to provide satisfaction. As Anselm puts it: *Nihil autem asperius aut difficilius potest homo ad honorem dei sponte et non ex debito pati quam mortem, et nullatenus se ipsum potest homo dare magis deo, quam cum se morti tradit ad honorem illius.*⁷¹ The God-man turns the instrument of punishment into the means of satisfaction of the *honor* of God. Whereas the *dishonoring* of God was to such a great extent that an

⁷⁰ See Anselm's *De conceptu virginali* for a full explanation of the relationship between the God-man and original sin. He also here distinguishes the unique nature of the conception of the God-man from those of other miraculously-conceived human beings (e.g. – John the Baptist).

⁷¹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

extreme level of punishment was needed, the satisfaction accomplished by the death of the one for whom death was not required constituted the greatest act of self-giving for the *honor* of God. The way that Anselm understood and used *honor* allowed him to underscore the ultimate, even perfect, love of God toward humanity by demonstrating that it complements the ultimate *dishonor* of God by human sin.⁷² Anselm articulates the need for this just as strongly as Athanasius explains that God was driven to restore the *image* in humanity by His goodness and love. The correspondence between human sin and the death of the God-man cannot be understated. Athanasius argued that the image of God must be restored after humanity failed to remain in obedience to God. Athanasius' emphasis on the goodness and love of God in driving the restoration of the same image in humanity that had been corrupted provides the best analogue for Anselm's use of *honor* to describe the way that the death of the God-man in an act of ultimate self-giving provided the perfect complement and satisfaction for the act of sin that marred the *honor* of God.

⁷² This, then, constitutes a higher-level issue of concern for the motivation of the Incarnation in contrast to the mundane objections to the Incarnation.

Chapter 3

Justice

For Anselm, *honor* provides the framework for his argument for the necessity of the Incarnation, but it is his conception of *justice* that moves the argument along through its steps. As Foley points out, “compensation is due to the honour of God, but it is required by His justice; the justice is involved in the acceptance of Christ’s death as a reparation.”¹ Foley and other critics for generations have seized upon Anselm’s use of the term *justice* (*iustitia*) and held it up as a prime indicator of the feudal nature of Anselm’s thought process in the *CDH*, much like Southern’s focus on *honor* described in the previous chapter. Foley, himself reflecting the critiques set out by the textbook histories of theology from the 19th century, takes issue primarily with what he perceives to be Anselm’s strict opposition between *justice* and mercy. He sees no place for this kind of *justice* in Christianity, let alone any theory of the atonement: “If infinite justice demands its due, what sphere of activity has infinite love? There must be a necessity for our redemption in the eternal nature of His love; to centre theology in His justice is paganism, not Christianity.”² In this chapter, I would like to argue that Anselm used the term *justice* (and its variants, including related usages of *iustitia*) in a different way than his critics have assumed. I will trace the usage of *justice* beginning with Augustine and

¹ George Cadwalader Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 149.

² *Ibid.*, 166.

the devil-ransom theory that Anselm refutes through to the conclusion of the *CDH* where it plays an important role. I will then examine the critiques of Anselm's use of *justice* and argue that his critics have mistakenly assumed a meaning of *justice* taken from Augustine's soteriological theory, which Anselm specifically avoids. I will then conclude with a re-interpretation of Anselm's usage of *justice* based on a revised understanding of its meaning. It is hoped that this will better position the *CDH* with regard to Augustine's devil-ransom theory and also answer wholesale critiques of the *CDH* that are based in large part on a misunderstanding of Anselm's use of the term *justice*.

Anselm and Augustine on Justice

Anselm first discusses *justice* in the context of his rejection of the devil-ransom theory of the atonement in book I, chapter 7. He broadly characterizes the theory as one in which it is said that “*deum...debuisse prius per iustitiam contra diabolum agere, ut liberaret hominem, quam per fortitudinem...*”³ *Justice* was prioritized over the power of God because sinful humans were supposedly justly under the power of the devil by virtue of sin. In sinning, humans handed themselves over from serving God to serving the devil, since humans had at the same time disobeyed God and followed the lead of the devil. Because humans had willingly handed themselves over to the devil, God could not simply remove them from the power of the devil without paying a ransom in exchange. The assumption is that God could not do anything in violation of strict *justice* and must, therefore, compensate the devil in exchange for his loss of human servitude. So, the devil-ransom theory posits that the life of Christ was offered to the devil in exchange for

³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938), *CDH* lib. I, cap. 7 (II, 55).

humanity, since Christ was the only human not under the control of the devil. However, it is important to note that Anselm rejects both this theory and the understanding of *justice* that it assumes. Anselm points out that “*diabolus aut homo non sit nisi dei et neuter extra potestatem dei consistat.*”⁴ Since both the devil and humans are in the service of God, Anselm re-casts the situation as one in which “*servum suum...suo conservo communem dominum deserere et ad se transire persuasisset...*”⁵ By this reckoning, God cannot act unjustly with respect to the devil since the devil is under the power of God in the same way that devil-ransom theory proponents argue that humans were under the power of the devil. The alleged tension between *justice* and the power of God is a *non sequitur*, then, for Anselm since there is no difference in standing toward God between the devil and human beings. With both the devil and human beings in equal service to God, even if human beings were under the power of the devil, this would be no motivation for the Incarnation and Atonement. However, Anselm would disagree even with the idea that humans were in bondage to the devil. As discussed in the previous chapter, the relationship between God and humanity is defined by the order set out by the idea of honor. This is more fundamental than (and thus supersedes) any relationship between humanity and the devil.

By rejecting the devil-ransom theory in this way, Anselm shows that he is operating with a different understanding of *justice* than that of the devil-ransom proponents (most notably Augustine of Hippo). Anselm has denied both the narrative of the events surrounding the fall of humanity and the impact of it upon divine *justice*. In order to better understand Anselm’s position, it is important to examine the background

⁴ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 7 (II, 56).

⁵ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 7 (II, 57).

of Augustine's theory to show how Anselm is setting himself apart from the theologian who was most influential for him. The devil-ransom view of justice starts with the role of justice in dealing with the first human sin. According to Augustine, "*Quadam justitia Dei in potestatem diaboli traditum est genus humanum, peccato primi hominis in omnes utriusque sexus commixtione nascentes originaliter transeunte, et parentum primorum debito universos posteros obligante.*"⁶ He adduces the "handing over" from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians in which he talks about sinners walking "*secundum principem potestatis aeris.*" He takes this to indicate that the original humans who sinned (and all who were born in sin thereafter) were handed over to the control of the devil.

Augustine describes the manner of this "handing over" as one in which God merely allows it to happen: "*Modus autem iste quo traditus est homo in diaboli potestatem, non ita debet intelligi, tanquam hoc Deus fecerit, aut fieri jusserit: sed quod tantum permiserit, juste tamen.*"⁷ Augustine portrays God as standing on the sidelines when humans were brought under the power of the devil, but he asserts that God permitted the action to occur "justly" (*juste*). He explains that God withdrew himself from humanity to the extent that they were no longer subject to him, but rather to the devil. Similarly, the remission of sins delivers humanity from this subjection to the devil and provides reconciliation with God: "*Si ergo commissio peccatorum per iram Dei justam hominem subdidit diabolo, profecto remissio peccatorum per reconciliationem Dei benignam eruit hominem a diabolo.*"⁸ This sort of *justice* that would allow the devil to be inserted in the place of God in some part of the life of humanity is perplexing, to

⁶ Augustine of Hippo, *De Trinitate*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, Patrologia Latina (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 1996), XIII.4.

⁷ Ibid., XIII.4.

⁸ Ibid., XIII.4.

say the least. Augustine does not detail exactly how humanity is subjected to the devil as a result of sin, though he does assert that there are certain areas in which humans were still subject to God: as creator, life-giver, benefactor, divine lawgiver, etc. However, the “*ira dei justa*” that subjects humans to the devil in Augustine’s system is difficult, if not impossible, to defend or qualify. Even Edmund Hill, in the notes to his English translation of *De Trinitate*, is compelled to make the following comment:

Explanations of the redemption in terms of justice are not very fashionable nowadays. Indeed they are regarded with a reserve verging on disapproval as being “legalistic” or “feudal” or “juridical” – all of which are very bad names indeed. And even if we can stomach such qualities in a theological explanation, most of us nowadays find it rather peculiar to think of the devil as having legal rights which God has somehow to buy him out of, and we assume that some such idea as this is involved in talking about God overcoming the devil with justice.⁹

If Augustine’s soteriological work faced charges of feudalism based on the use of the term *justice*, it is interesting that Anselm also faced this charge despite his rejection of Augustine’s approach, specifically with regard to the role of *justice*. A *justice* that would prompt God to withdraw from humanity to any extent and even allow humans to become subjects of the devil does seem objectionable. However, this is Augustine’s *justice*, not Anselm’s. Anselm specifically repudiates the idea that humans were subjected to the devil as a result of sin. As we have seen above, Anselm argues that divine *justice* would not allow humans to become subjected to the devil, but instead would maintain the subjection of all creatures to God. Perhaps some of the charges that critics bring against Anselm’s use of *justice* stem from the incorrect assumption that Anselm was operating with the same definition of *justice* as Augustine.

⁹ ———, *The Trinity*, ed. John E. Rotelle, O.S.A., trans. Edmund Hill, O.P., vol. 5, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1991), 367 n. 36.

Anselm's Justice Beyond Augustine

Anselm goes beyond a mere rebuttal of Augustine's position in his use of *justice* in the *Cur Deus Homo*. He uses *iustus*, *iustitia* and other forms of the same root over 175 times in the *CDH* to describe the role of *justice* in the Incarnation and Atonement. The majority of the usages involves instances in which the terms translate into English as justice, righteous(ness) and unrighteous(ness)/wrongdoing. Anselm uses the term in a complicated and sophisticated way that has challenged translators to develop consistent patterns of translation in spite of the various contexts in which Anselm employs the term. In this, he was likely influenced not only by Augustine's usage but also by the way that the term was employed in the Vulgate.¹⁰ In the following section, I will examine the way that Anselm develops his understanding of *justice* beyond his disagreement with the way that Augustine and others used it in the devil-ransom theory.

After his rejection of the devil-ransom theory, Anselm next addressed *justice* in his discussion of whether human sin could be merely forgiven by God without the necessity of the Incarnation. He takes up the point in connection with freedom of the divine will and whether God's will is somehow restricted by not being able to will the forgiveness of human sin without the Incarnation. Anselm argues that God does not will this because it is unfitting that God would leave anything unregulated within creation and that mere forgiveness of sin would disrupt this order of regulation. He concludes by arguing that "*itaque de illis tantum verum est dicere: si deus hoc vult, iustum est, quae*

¹⁰ Anselm of Canterbury, *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), xxiv. Davies and Evans point this out here in the "Note on the Text and Translators" – "Another term which presents huge difficulties is *iustitia*. It means both 'righteousness' and 'justice' and the play of that double meaning in the Vulgate translation of the Bible was of endless importance in Anselm's own thinking."

deum velle non est inconueniens.”¹¹ Divine *justice*, then, does not compel God to act in ways that are not fitting. Additionally, the divine will does not will anything that is not fitting. The will and *justice* of God are consistent with the nature of God as a perfect being and so no inconsistency can be introduced by pitting one divine attribute or activity against another. Thus, in this case, God’s will is not so “free” that it can will something inconsistent with the divine nature (e.g. – mere forgiveness of human sin without regulation/reparation).

Having raised the issue of *justice* with regard to the will of God, in the next chapter Anselm discusses the extent to which human sin represents an offense to the *justice* of God. As reviewed in the previous chapter of this study, Anselm characterizes sin as the failure to render honor to God as creator. For Anselm, this creates an intolerable situation in regard to God. He goes further to state that “*nihil autem iniustius toleratur, quam quo nihil est minus tolerandum.*”¹² From this characterization of injustice Anselm argues for an inherent connection between the *justice* and honor of God: “*nihil iustius quam honorem illius servat in rerum dispositione summa iustitia, quae non est aliud quam ipse deus.*”¹³ An affront to God’s honor is an affront to the *justice* of God, which, as Anselm reminds his audience, is identical to God himself. This latter point harkens back to Anselm’s work in the *Monologion* in which he uses the example of *justice* to argue that God simply is whatever it is better to be than not. He argues that God *is* these things due to His divine nature, rather than participating in some external quality (e.g. – goodness, justice, beauty, etc.): “*bona vel magna vel subsistens quod est,*

¹¹ ———, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 12 (II, 70).

¹² Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71).

¹³ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71).

omnino per se est, non per aliud.”¹⁴ With regard to the specific case of *justice* then, “*eadem natura est ipsa iustitia; et cum dicitur esse iusta per iustitiam, idem est quod per se.*”¹⁵ Here, Anselm establishes the principle that God is supreme *justice* and vice versa. In this, he is strongly influenced by Augustine, who makes a similar point in *De Civitate Dei*.¹⁶ So, Anselm here places the weight of the nature and essence of God behind the idea that God’s honor must be preserved. This preservation takes place within the context of *justice* and so the nature and *justice* of God are at stake when human sin threatens the honor of God. This principle drives Anselm to argue for the necessity of the resolution for human sin (“*aut ablatus honor solvatur aut poena sequatur*”) since the alternative would be to deny divine *justice* (“*aut sibi deus ipsi iustus non erit*”) or to deny divine omnipotence (“*aut ad utrumque impotens erit*”).¹⁷ Neither alternative is acceptable for him since both involve introducing internal inconsistencies into the nature of God, so his argument concerning the honor of God carries on with the two possibilities presented by divine *justice*.¹⁸ This is one instance in which *justice* drives Anselm’s argument, in this case by narrowing the range of possibilities.

Anselm emphasizes *justice* in the next stage of his argument when he discusses the effect of human sin on the relationship between God and humanity. He argues that

¹⁴ Ibid., *Monologion*, cap. 16 (I, 30).

¹⁵ Ibid., cap. 16 (I, 30).

¹⁶ “*illa simplicia, quae principaliter vereque divina sunt, quod non aliud est in eis qualitas, aliud substantia, nec aliorum participatione vel divina, vel sapientia, vel beata sunt.*” - Augustine of Hippo, *De Civitate Dei Contra Paganos*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, Patrologia Latina (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 1996), XI.10.

¹⁷ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71).

¹⁸ It is interesting that Anselm finds himself facing a similar tension between the justice and power of God to the one that Augustine raised in his version of the devil-ransom theory. For Augustine, the tension revolved around the interaction between God and the devil. For Anselm, the tension is solely concerned with the internal consistency of the nature of God.

human sin deprived God of “*quidquid de humana natura facere proposuerat.*”¹⁹ He then appeals to *justice* to show that humanity in and of itself is incapable of making recompense for this theft: “*Intende in districtam iustitiam, et iudica secundum illam, utrum ad aequalitatem peccati homo satisfaciat deo, nisi id ipsum quod permittendo se vinci a diabolo deo abstulit, diabolum vincendo restituat.*”²⁰ This “strict justice” demands that the repayment be equal and complementary to what was taken. So, since the event of the initial sin was a victory for the devil and a loss for God, the repayment must come in the form of a loss for the devil and a victory for God.²¹ Anselm asks Boso rhetorically: “*Putasne summam iustitiam hanc iustitiam posse violare?*”,²² emphasizing that the just resolution to the problem of sin is perfectly fitting with God’s nature as supreme *justice*. *Justice*, then, drives Anselm to make the next key move in his argument when he asserts to Boso that humanity has been so thoroughly corrupted by sin that no human being is born without it. However, the way that the human race can fulfill the plan that God intended would be for a human being to be victorious over sin to such an extent that there are enough righteous, justified humans to fill the gap in heaven that was left by the fallen angels. Anselm brings the problem to a head when he concludes that “*hoc facere nullatenus potest peccator homo, quia peccator peccatorem iustificare nequit.*”²³ No human born in sin can provide for the salvation of humanity in the just way that Anselm described. To this, Boso mournfully replies, “*Et nihil iustius et nihil*

¹⁹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

²¹ The contrast between the devil and God over the first sin and the satisfaction for sin shows that Anselm is still heavily influenced by the Augustinian account of the atonement. The devil still plays a role, but it is a different, side role. The devil’s victory and defeat are secondary to the interplay between God and humanity.

²² Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

²³ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

impossibilius. Sed ex his omnibus videtur misericordia dei et spes hominis perire, quantum ad beatitudinem spectat, ad quam factus est homo.”²⁴ The working of *justice* seems to have led to an impossible situation for the salvation of humanity. The death of divine mercy and human hope are also tied to this move, since there does not seem to be any room for God to intervene on behalf of humanity, since it is God’s own supreme *justice* that has seemingly placed salvation beyond human reach.

Anselm defers the discussion of the tension between *justice* and mercy and turns first to the issue that humanity can still be judged to be unjust even if humans lack the capability to conform to *justice*. Even though the initial human sin removed the ability for humanity to make recompense for sin and fulfill the divine purpose for the creation of humanity, it is still no excuse for the failure of humans to make recompense for sins and live righteously to the extent that heaven can have its full complement of righteous beings restored. He begins by making the point that the stakes for humanity are higher since they are being judged on actions related to God and not merely inter-human actions: “*Si homo dicitur iniustus, qui homini non reddit quod debet: multo magis iniustus est, qui deo quod debet non reddit.*”²⁵ After Boso questions how someone can be blameworthy if they do not have the capacity to act justly, Anselm responds by allowing that there might be a valid excuse, but not if the incapacity is the fault of the individual in question: “*Sed si in ipsa impotentia culpa est: sicut non levigat peccatum, ita non excusat non*

²⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 23 (II, 91).

²⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 92). The translation of the CDH by Janet Fairweather in the Oxford World Classics series (“The Major Works”) somewhat misleadingly translates “*iniustus*” as “wrongdoer” in this chapter when the term is used to refer to human beings. I find it more helpful here to translate it as “unjust” or “an unjust person” in order to better connect it the usage with the discussion of divine *justice* in the remainder of the chapter.

reddentem debitum.”²⁶ Rather than excusing an ongoing failure to fulfill the purpose of God in humanity, the initial sin is placed in a position of even greater injustice since it had the effect of both a one-time injustice and a continuing state of injustice in humanity.

Anselm then addresses the question of divine mercy in relation to a divine *justice* that seems to offer no human possibility for salvation and excludes even simple divine intervention. Anselm recognized the tension between *justice* and mercy and, although he addresses it directly, his later critics accuse him of providing an unsatisfactory explanation of the relationship between the two. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, Foley took issue with what he viewed as an extreme prioritization of *justice* that rendered mercy non-existent:

He made such a complete distinction between *justice* and mercy as to render antagonism possible, and then arrayed the one against the other by portraying the one as demanding what the other does not. This is a practical revival of the Gnosticism of Marcion. Mercy was represented as helpless until *justice* was satisfied; their reconciliation was the proof of their previous opposition.²⁷

Anselm both exacerbates and anticipates this critique in Book I, chapter 24. He raises the possibility of divine mercy remitting either what humanity was supposed to provide to God or the punishment that humanity was to receive for failing to fulfill their created purpose. He argues that these characterizations of divine mercy contradict divine *justice* and are thus impossible situations: “*Verum huiusmodi misericordia dei nimis est contraria iustitiae illius, quae non nisi poenam permittit reddi propter peccatum. Quapropter quemadmodum deum sibi esse contrarium, ita hoc modo illum esse*

²⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 92).

²⁷ Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement*, 173.

misericordem impossibile est.”²⁸ He sharply contrasts this view of divine mercy with *justice*, but he immediately follows it up with an alternate understanding of mercy.

The kind of mercy that would circumvent the workings and effects of divine *justice* is a false understanding of mercy according to Anselm. Since he does not deny that God is merciful along with being just (that is to say, God is supreme mercy in the same way that God is supreme *justice*), he offers an alternative interpretation for the place of mercy in his soteriology. Boso represents the voice of one who looks for a divine mercy that circumvents the operation of divine *justice* to provide a way out of the effects of sin without incurring punishment or satisfaction. Anselm acknowledges the role of mercy in human salvation but he locates it later in the process than his interlocutor has in mind: after satisfaction is made – “*Misericordem deum esse non nego, qui ‘homines et iumenta’ salvat, ‘quemadmodum’ multiplicavit ‘misericordiam’ suam. Nos autem loquimur de illa ultima misericordia, qua post hanc vitam beatum facit hominem.*”²⁹ Anselm’s mercy works in conjunction with (though his critics might say that it is subservient to) divine *justice* by granting eternal blessings to human beings chronologically after human life has been completed and logically after satisfaction has been made for sin. The mercy of God, then, is inherently connected to the salvation that is provided by the God-man. Furthermore, as with all divine attributes, it is inseparable and indistinguishable from the *justice*, power, goodness, etc. of God. By that reasoning, the mercy of God may be found in those activities that are attributed to the *justice* of God. Even though the two may seem to be opposed, Anselm unites them by locating them in

²⁸ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 93).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 94).

the same activity of God: the salvation of humans. Salvation through satisfaction for sins is the merciful conclusion of a series of events driven by *justice*.

Marilyn McCord Adams argues that *justice* and mercy are so intertwined in Anselm's work that, not only is it not possible to distinguish separate salvific activities between the two, mercy "emerges as initiator and relentlessly driving force,"³⁰ especially upon consideration of Book II of the *CDH*. Bearing this in mind, Adams argues that *justice* serves as the rhetorical front-man for the activity of mercy:

...in the order of explanation, Mercy is prior to both sin and satisfaction insofar as Mercy orders the beatific end and chooses as means "loop-hold" general policies with regard to Adam's race; in the order of execution, Mercy is prior to and simultaneous with the payment of satisfaction, insofar as Mercy orders the Incarnation and insures the God-man's sinless career. Why, then, does *Cur Deus Homo* lead with an argument from "strict justice" that seems to put satisfaction first? In my judgment, rhetorical strategy is key.³¹

Although I do not agree that Anselm emphasized *justice* for merely rhetorical strategy (Adams herself acknowledges Anselm's earlier emphasis on *justice* in the *Proslogion* that seems to carry through to the *CDH*), her counter-emphasis on mercy is helpful to illustrate Anselm's belief that he was not shortchanging mercy, but rather choosing to locate it at different points in his argument than his critics might wish to find it themselves. I would prefer to push the issue even further and argue that Anselm did not wish to differentiate between the mercy and *justice* of God in the Incarnation at all. As discussed earlier, he ultimately locates divine mercy in the granting of the state of blessedness to humanity after satisfaction has been made for sin. However, Anselm is clear that this is the result of the operation of divine *justice*. His position seems to be that

³⁰ Marilyn McCord Adams, "Satisfying Mercy: St. Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*, Reconsidered," *The Modern Schoolman* 72 (1995), 97.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

justice and mercy are two sides of the same coin in his soteriology. This seems to be the goal of Book II, chapter 20 in which he claims (and practically exclaims) “*quam magna et quam iusta sit misericordia dei.*”³² Although his definition of divine mercy might not be shared with his critics, he seems to be content with viewing the broad story of human redemption as merciful: “*cum peccatori tormentis aeternis damnato et unde se redimat non habenti deus pater dicit: accipe unigenitum meum et da pro te; et ipse filius: tolle me et redime te?*”³³ Adams does not attribute much more than this to the “merciful management” that she finds in the *CDH*: “destining humans to eternal beatific intimacy,” “powers of reason and will, equipping will with freedom, spontaneity, inclinations to justice and advantage,” “the dignity of human nature,” etc.³⁴

Having discussed the usage of *justice* in Book I of the *CDH* in which Anselm used the concept of divine *justice* to argue for the necessity of human salvation through a God-man, it remains to examine Anselm’s use of *justice* in Book II. Here, he makes his detailed argument for the necessity of the Incarnation and follows his *remoto Christo* method by assuming no particularly-Christian theological principles.³⁵ He begins with the creation of humanity and the role of *justice* with respect to the rational nature with which God created human beings. He assumes the universality of the idea that God created humans to be rational creatures, but he is careful to make the connection between

³² Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia.*, *CDH* lib. II, cap. 20 (II, 131).

³³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 20 (II, 132).

³⁴ Adams, “Satisfying Mercy.”, 97-101.

³⁵ While attempting to broaden his scope beyond the walls of Christianity in making this move, Anselm clearly does not wish to accept or assume any principle that is incompatible with Christianity, despite the later charges of some critics. For him, natural reasoning and logic are divinely ordained and perfectly compatible with a Christian perspective.

rationality and *justice*.³⁶ For him, the purpose of the rationality that was endowed upon human beings (by contrast to all other creatures that do not have rationality) was to be oriented toward and conformed to divine *justice*: “*Ad hoc itaque factam esse rationalem naturam certum est, ut summum bonum super omnia amaret et eligeret, non propter aliud, sed propter ipsum. Si enim propter aliud, non ipsum sed aliud amat. At hoc nisi iusta facere nequit. Ut igitur frustra non sit rationalis, simul ad hoc rationalis et iusta facta est.*”³⁷ He further argues that this interconnection between rationality and *justice* constitutes the foundation for the purpose of humanity: to love and choose the highest good. The ultimate end of this combination of rationality and *justice* is “*beatus*”, the blessedness or blessed happiness of the eternal favor of God: “*Homo ergo qui rationalis natura est, factus est iustus ad hoc, ut deo fruendo beatus esset.*”³⁸ Anselm follows this up with a point that seems (to him) to naturally follow: that humans would not die so long as they do not waver in *justice* and the purpose for which they were created. For him, death is only a result of the failure to maintain the *just* nature of the original created state. He appeals to divine *justice* to make his point, as he argues that death is inconsonant with the *justice* of God, so long as humans do not fail in their own *justice*: “*sapientiae et iustitiae dei repugnat, ut cogeret mortem pati sine culpa, quem iustum ad aeternam fecit beatitudinem. Sequitur ergo quia, si numquam peccasset, numquam moreretur.*”³⁹

Taken together, these first two chapters of Book II exhibit the way that Anselm used

³⁶ Some translations render *iustus* as “righteous” in this section, but I would argue that “just” is a better translation to more clearly make the point that Anselm viewed human nature as ideally oriented toward and conforming to divine justice. In my view, “righteous” represents only the human equivalent of divine “justice” whereas Anselm was focused on bringing human and divine justice closer together, rather than distinguishing the two.

³⁷ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 1 (II, 97).

³⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 1 (II, 97).

³⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 2 (II, 98).

justice to lay the foundation for his argument, particularly the way in which he sought to appeal to his non-Christian audience. The doctrines of the initial *justice* and righteousness of humanity and the effect that sin had in introducing death are clearly represented in Christian scripture, but here Anselm defers a scriptural proof and relies instead on arguing that these theological precepts follow logically from the nature of God as supreme *justice*. In this way, again, *justice* moves Anselm's argument along from one premise to the next.

Justice and Necessity

Anselm's focus on *justice* and the creation of humanity leads him naturally into a discussion of necessity. *Justice* led him in his deduction of the purpose of the creation of human beings. Since there is a purpose (eternal, blessed happiness), two options present themselves: *aut hoc de humana perficiet deus natura quod incepit, aut in vanum fecit tam sublimem naturam ad tantum bonum.*⁴⁰ Since (as previously discussed), God did not intend for humanity to die, God does not will that the created purpose of humanity be frustrated. So, Anselm derives the necessity of the Incarnation to provide for the fulfillment of the purpose of humanity: "*Necesse est ergo, ut de humana natura quod incepit perficiat. Hoc autem fieri, sicut diximus, nequit, nisi per integram peccati satisfactionem, quam nullus peccator facere potest.*"⁴¹ Anselm takes pains to explain that the type of necessity he has in mind is a "naturally follows" necessity rather than an external, compulsory necessity. He spends chapter 5 of Book II clarifying his usage of necessity in anticipation of criticism that the salvation of humanity (as he described it) happened not for the benefit of humanity, but for the benefit of God.

⁴⁰ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 4 (II, 99).

⁴¹ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 4 (II, 99).

To illustrate the type of necessity by which he argues that the Incarnation must have happened in the way that it occurred, Anselm makes the comparison to promises to others or vows concerning holy living that a person might freely make with regard to future action:

*Nam si quod hodie sponte promittis cras te daturum, eadem cras voluntate das, quamvis necesse sit te cras reddere promissum, si potes, aut mentiri: non tamen minus tibi debet ille pro impenso beneficio cui das, quam si non promisisses, quoniam te debitorem ante tempus dationis illi facere non es cunctatus. Tale est, cum quis sanctae conversationis sponte vovet propositum.*⁴²

The promise and the vow are made freely; however, once made, there is a sense in which there is an obligation to complete the future action. Similarly, whenever God acts in any way, there is an absolute consistency between the beginning and the end. In the specific example of creation (and, consequently, salvation from sin), “*si deus facit bonum homini quod incepit, licet non deceat eum a bono incepto deficere, totum gratiae debemus imputare, quia hoc propter nos, non propter se nullius egens incepit.*”⁴³ Since creation was initially an action of grace for the benefit of humanity, there is no reason to alter that by arguing that any part of that overall process is done by compulsion, since the larger activity is one of grace. There is a necessity that the action should be brought to completion once begun, but that is an internal necessity owing to the nature of God and not an external necessity by which God is compelled to bring the action to completion by some outside force. Anselm makes this clear at the conclusion of chapter five: “*Quae scilicet necessitas non est aliud quam immutabilitas honestatis eius, quam a se ipso et non ab alio habet, et idcirco improprie dicitur necessitas. Dicamus tamen quia necesse*

⁴² Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 5 (II, 100).

⁴³ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 5 (II, 100).

est, ut bonitas dei propter immutabilitatem suam perficiat de homine quod incepit, quamvis totum sit gratia bonum quod facit.”⁴⁴ The immutability of God is the only principle that dictates the actions of God. So, although he admits that it is not the most proper term, Anselm is willing to apply the label of necessity to the process of human salvation by the God-man.

Anselm clearly felt the force of arguments relating to both extremes of necessity (that there were either open options or that God’s actions were compelled by some external force of necessity) because he returned to the subject in chapter 17 of Book II in response to further prodding on the subject from Boso. Here, he clarifies that divine necessity is directly connected to the divine will and forcefully disavows any outside influence on the will or activity of God: “*Omnis quippe necessitas et impossibilitas eius subiacet voluntati; illius autem voluntas nulli subditur necessitati aut impossibilitati. Nihil enim est necessarium aut impossibile, nisi quia ipse ita vult; ipsum vero aut velle aut nolle aliquid propter necessitatem aut impossibilitatem alienum est a veritate.*”⁴⁵ He also places the converse of necessity – impossibility – in its proper context given all that he has said about necessity: “*Quotiens namque dicitur deus non posse, nulla negatur in illo potestas, sed insuperabilis significatur potentia et fortitudo. Non enim aliud intelligitur, nisi quia nulla res potest efficere, ut ille agat quod negatur posse.*”⁴⁶ In both of these cases, Anselm is careful to preserve the principle that God acts in accordance with His nature. This gets to the heart of Anselm’s view of necessity as divine internal consistency. The necessity of divine actions is merely a logical outflow from the

⁴⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 5 (II, 100).

⁴⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 17 (II, 122).

⁴⁶ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 17 (II, 123).

necessity of divine being. He uses the example of telling the truth to make this point:

*“Nam cum dicimus quia necesse est deum semper verum dicere, et necesse est eum numquam mentiri, non dicitur aliud nisi quia tanta est in illo constantia servandi veritatem, ut necesse sit nullam rem facere posse, ut verum non dicat aut ut mentiatur.”*⁴⁷

The necessity is directly connected to the internal constancy or consistency of God, which never wavers from what is best. Any departure from the best would be a negative characteristic for God, so upholding what is best (and the necessity that is consequent) is a positive characteristic for God, by Anselm’s reasoning.

Eugene Fairweather points out that this rationale for the necessity of the Incarnation that Anselm employs is rooted in his understanding of *justice*. Fairweather characterizes Anselm’s understanding of *justice* as “the intrinsic order of reality, the *rectitudo* whose ultimate principle is God’s own being” and contends that “it is therefore by way of an argument based from start to finish on the acknowledgment of an indefectible order of *iustitia* that Anselm finally answers his question of the *necessitas* of the Incarnation.”⁴⁸ He goes on to quote a passage from book II, chapter six and draws the following conclusion: “No single phase of his argument is ultimately intelligible without reference to his metaphysic of order and rectitude; once we take that doctrine seriously, however, the whole argument takes form before our eyes as a coherent whole.”⁴⁹ In this way, then, *justice* not only moves Anselm’s argument along from one

⁴⁷ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 17 (II, 123-124).

⁴⁸ Eugene R. Fairweather, “‘Iustitia Dei’ As The ‘Ratio’ Of the Incarnation,” in *Spicilegium Beccense: Congrès International Du Ixe Centenaire De L’arrivée D’anselme Au Bec* (Le Bec-Hellouin; Paris: Abbaye Notre-Dame du Bec; J. Vrin, 1959)., 334-335.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 335.

point to the next, but it also provides a *ratio* that unites all points, even ones that do not explicitly reference *justice*.

Brian Leftow offers a different interpretation of necessity for Anselm, but still indicates the close connection between *justice* and necessity for Anselm. Leftow reads Anselm and the *CDH* through the lens of Thomas Aquinas and Aquinas' own variation on Anselm's work in his article "Anselm on the Necessity of the Incarnation."⁵⁰ Leftow lists a number of reasons that Anselm gives for the necessity of the Incarnation via the life and death of a God-man that are all rooted in the divine nature and divine *justice*: "that in 'strict justice', satisfaction ought to be proportional to the crime," "that God is not fair to Himself if He settles for less," "that God would be unfair to His supreme worth if He let that be insulted," "that if God leaves sin unpunished and yet forgives it, He unfairly treats Adamic humans and unfallen angels as equals" and "that if sin were neither punished nor paid for, that would violate the *prima facie* order of justice, which demands the one or the other."⁵¹ He argues that "nothing prevents our taking these considerations as all *prima* rather than *ultima facie* moral reasons for God to become incarnate and atone for humanity. *Prima facie* 'oughts' are precisely 'oughts' which one can at times permissibly ignore."⁵² Leftow builds on this idea that Anselm's explanations from *justice* are all contingent and contends that the necessity that Anselm utilizes in his argument involves multiple options from among which God chooses: "The 'necessity' Anselm sees in God's choice God [sic] to become incarnate and atone, I suggest, is the 'necessity' that a perfectly rational God choose to maximize the value His

⁵⁰ Brian Leftow, "Anselm on the Necessity of the Incarnation," *Religious Studies* 31 (1995), 167-185.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 182.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 182.

plan of salvation realizes. The plan God chooses satisfies these *prima facie* moral demands. That is a good reason to choose it, and God is maximally sensitive to good reasons.”⁵³ Leftow’s agenda is to show that Anselm’s understanding of “necessity” in the *CDH* is the same as Aquinas’ view of the necessity of the Incarnation. However, Aquinas’ view of necessity does not seem to match up with Anselm’s upon examination of the primary texts. Aquinas seems to argue that the salvation of humanity in the way that Anselm described it was necessary only insofar as it was one option among many possible options:

*ad finem aliquem dicitur aliquid esse necessarium dupliciter, uno modo, sine quo aliquid esse non potest, sicut cibus est necessarius ad conservationem humanae vitae; alio modo, per quod melius et convenientius pervenitur ad finem, sicut equus necessarius est ad iter. Primo modo Deum incarnari non fuit necessarium ad reparationem humanae naturae, Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam multis aliis modis reparare. Secundo autem modo necessarium fuit Deum incarnari ad humanae naturae reparationem.*⁵⁴

I would argue that Anselm’s understanding of necessity is much closer to Aquinas’ first way, which he explicitly renounces. Anselm is clear (as seen earlier) that he believes that there was only one way to fulfill the demands of *justice*. Even though he also argues that it was better and more convenient than the supposed alternatives, he does not believe that there was any real, possible alternative to the Incarnation and Atonement as it happened.

Aquinas’ differentiation from Anselm on necessity and Leftow’s interpretation of both indicate a difference in the respective understandings of Anselm’s use of *justice*. Anselm is guided by the concept of *justice* to argue that there was one and only one way that the salvation of humanity could have been accomplished, given God’s free choice to

⁵³ Ibid., 183.

⁵⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae 3a.1-6*, vol. 48 (London: Blackfriars, 1976)., 10 (ST IIIa q1 a2).

create humanity. Aquinas and Leftow seem to want to extend divine freedom of choice beyond the initial choice of creation and attribute real, possible alternatives at every step of the way from sin through salvation. By contrast, Augustine portrayed God as almost constrained by *justice* and the rights of the devil, to such an extent that God's free will was constrained by the contingent decision of humans to commit sin and the rights of the devil that resulted. Anselm clearly disagrees with both of these positions in the *CDH* and, fittingly, offers a solution that mediates between the positions of Augustine and Aquinas. Whereas Aquinas seemed concerned with avoiding any limitation on divine freedom, Augustine seemed to have been concerned with preserving scriptural narratives that alluded to some sort of power that the devil had over human beings. Anselm's concern, by contrast, is that God always does what is best. Katherin A. Rogers makes the point that Anselm's position on necessity in the *CDH* serves a broader purpose of resolving any possible tension between divine freedom and necessity:

God "must" respond to human sin by saving His creation, and He must save it in the only way God can do anything, that is, the best way. But this necessity is in no way a limitation on God. It is not a limitation because it arises from His own nature as best. The first cause in this chain of relationships is God Himself. It is not that human sin *causes* God to become incarnate. God "must" become incarnate because He does the best because He is perfect. A similar point can be made with respect to all of God's "reactions" to the free choices of creatures. God gives us freedom because He Himself is good. The originating cause of the whole system in which God would respond to free choices is God, and so His aseity is preserved.⁵⁵

This brings to mind Anselm's definition of *justice* from his *De Veritate*: "*Iustitia igitur est rectitudo voluntatis propter se servata.*"⁵⁶ For God, what is "right" is always what is

⁵⁵ Katherin A. Rogers, *Perfect Being Theology*, Reason and Religion (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 37.

⁵⁶ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *De Veritate* cap. 12 (I, 194).

“best,” according to Anselm. Anselm makes this point in many places, perhaps none better known than in his *Proslogion*, in which he lays out his argument for the existence of God: “*Tu es itaque iustus, verax, beatus, et quidquid melius est esse quam non esse. Melius namque est esse iustum quam non iustum, beatum quam non beatum.*”⁵⁷

Anselm’s understanding of *justice* is inseparable from his view on necessity, since God as supreme *justice* necessarily does what is best by virtue of the fact that God both is and does what is supremely right. This naturally leads Anselm to argue and believe that his version of the soteriological process involving the God-man was necessarily the one and only possible series of events. This is all built into Anselm’s understanding of *justice*.

The connection between *justice* and necessity leads Anselm to argue that the key aspects of the Incarnation of the God-man were necessary because they represented the best possible means for effecting the salvation of humanity. So, after addressing necessity in Book II, chapter five, Anselm addresses a number of topics that, for him, are natural (or even logical) consequences of the fact that God necessarily saved humanity via a God-man:

VI. Quod satisfactionem per quam salvatur homo, non possit facere nisi deus-homo.

VII. Quod necesse sit eundem ipsum esse perfectum deum et perfectum hominem.

VIII. Quod ex genere ADAE et de virgine-femina deum oporteat assumere hominem.

IX. Quod necesse sit verbum solum et hominem in unam convenire personam.

X. Quod idem homo non ex debito moriatur; et quomodo possit vel non possit peccare; et cur ille vel angelus de sua iustitia laudandus sit, cum peccare non possint.

XI. Quod moriatur ex sua potestate; et quod mortalitas non pertineat ad puram hominis naturam.

⁵⁷ Ibid., *Proslogion* cap. 5 (I, 104).

XII. *Quod quamvis incommodorum nostrorum particeps sit, miser tamen non sit.*

XIII. *Quod cum aliis infirmitatibus nostris ignorantiam non habeat.*⁵⁸

Anselm links these chapters together with phrases such as “*Hoc autem fieri nequit, nisi...*,”⁵⁹ “*Investigandum nunc est quomodo...possit...*,”⁶⁰ “*Restat nunc quaerere unde et quomodo...*,”⁶¹ and “*Nunc autem restat indagare utrum possit...*”⁶² He uses this language of “investigating,” “seeking,” “finding” *now* to illustrate how each point follows on what has come before. For Anselm, these tenets of the Incarnation reflect the methods and paths of supreme justice – in the words of Boso, “*Non videtur aliquid iustius.*”⁶³ Anselm proceeds through the steps of his argument by asserting that each step is the natural result of the proceedings of supreme *justice*.

In the discussion of the previous section of eight chapters in Book II, it should be noted that Anselm did not explicitly appeal to *justice* at every turn. Rather, he explored what followed necessarily from the intervention of God through “investigations” and “demonstrations” in which he argued for what was “just,” “right,” “fitting,” etc. However, there seem to be some points on which Anselm is aware of possible (and real) critiques of his line of argumentation. One obvious point is the death of the God-man, a point that is at the thrust of the objections of unbelievers listed at the beginning of the

⁵⁸ Ibid., *Cur Deus Homo Capitula libri secundi* (II, 46).

⁵⁹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 6 (II, 101).

⁶⁰ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 7 (II, 101).

⁶¹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 8 (II, 102).

⁶² Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 109).

⁶³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 6 (II, 101). Anselm finds a seemingly unending number of ways for Boso to agree with him in the *CDH*. In this chapter alone, Boso uses five different phrases to move the conversation along by agreeing with Anselm (“*Ita constat*,” “*Nequeo negare*,” “*Verum est*,” “*Sic sequitur*,” and “*Non videtur aliquid iustius*”).

work.⁶⁴ Anselm is careful to make the argument that the death of the God-man was neither arbitrary nor injurious:

*Si homo per suavitatem peccavit: an non convenit ut per asperitatem satisfaciat? Et si tam facile victus est a diabolo ut deum peccando exhonoreret, ut facilius non posset: nonne iustum est ut homo satisfaciens pro peccato tanta difficultate vincat diabolum ad honorem dei, ut maiori non possit? An non est dignum quatenus, qui se sic abstulit deo peccando, ut se plus auferre non posset, sic se det deo satisfaciendo, ut magis se non possit dare?*⁶⁵

Here, he contrasts the difficulty (“*tanta difficultate*”) of the death of the God-man that provided for human salvation from sin with the ease (“*tam facile*”) that humanity fell into sin and came to require salvation. He appeals to *justice* (in addition to fittingness and appropriateness) to make the key point that the unseemly matters of the suffering and death of the God-man were not only rational but necessary. He makes this connection by arguing that death is the action with the greatest degree of difficulty for humans: “*Nihil autem asperius aut difficilius potest homo ad honorem dei sponte et non ex debito pati quam mortem, et nullatenus se ipsum potest homo dare magis deo, quam cum se morti tradit ad honorem illius.*”⁶⁶

Up to this point, he has argued that God must act to save humanity through the God-man, but the means of this salvation have not been explored in detail. Anselm appeals to *justice* here for the same purpose as he has in earlier cases: to argue that the events of the Incarnation are consistent with the nature of God. In this case, he does not go into much more detail as he argues for the broad point that the salvation of humanity must be accomplished through death and self-giving. It is notable that from this point of

⁶⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 3 (II, 50)

⁶⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

⁶⁶ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

Book II until chapter 18, Anselm does not appeal to *justice* or use *justice* to move his argument through its various steps in the same way that he did throughout the earlier parts of the work. This section covers the crucial issue of how the death of the God-man counteracts the sin of humanity. Anselm and Boso engage in a dialogue in chapter 14 that leaves a great deal unsaid. The key issue is that “*peccatum quod in persona eius fit, incomparabiliter superat omnia illa, quae extra personam illius cogitari possunt.*”⁶⁷ However, Anselm does not explore the details of why this is so, even though this is a crucial step in his line of argumentation. He went to great lengths to explain the magnitude of human sin (and the attendant injustice) in earlier chapters but he comes up short here in explaining the *justice* of the death of the God-man. The thrust of the point that Anselm makes here comes in the voice of Boso: “*Si omne bonum tam bonum est quam mala est eius destructio, plus est bonum incomparabiliter, quam sint ea peccata mala, quae sine aestimatione superat eius interemptio.*”⁶⁸ Anselm has not explained why the death of the God-man is such a bad thing (especially if that was the will of God and the purpose of the Incarnation) and consequently how the self-offering in death of the God-man can outweigh the debt of sin owed by humanity. The latter point will be taken up in the next chapter concerning Anselm’s use of the term “debt,” but the former point still stands as a weakness of Anselm’s argument. He would have been better served to explain the role of *justice* in the self-offering of the God-man to death since he went to such great lengths to emphasize the role of *justice* in so many earlier points.

The lacunae in Anselm’s use of *justice* are made all the more obvious by the fact that Anselm makes it such an important part of his argument in other key locations.

⁶⁷ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 14 (II, 114).

⁶⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 14 (II, 114).

Anselm uses *justice* to drive his argument to its conclusion when he explains how the work of the God-man can be applied to the benefit of humanity. Concerning the greatness of what the God-man did through His death, Anselm argues that He deserves some sort of recompense for this action: “*Immo necesse esse video, ut pater filio retribuat. Alioquin aut iniustus videretur esse si nollet, aut impotens si non posset; quae a deo aliena sunt.*”⁶⁹ Obviously God has the power to reward the God-man, so any suggestion that He would not provide recompense is a matter of divine *justice*.⁷⁰

However, Anselm acknowledges the absurdity of God rewarding God, even within the context of the persons of the Trinity. So, the gift stands superfluous, but Anselm argues that this is an impossible situation because it would mean that the action of the God-man was carried out in vain (“*in vanum filius tantam rem fecisse videbitur*”⁷¹). Since this cannot be, Anselm suggests that the compensatory gift could be redirected to whomever the God-man should choose: “*Immo et iustum et necessarium intelligo, ut cui voluerit dare filius, a patre reddatur; quia et filio quod suum est dare licet, et pater quod debet non nisi alii reddere potest.*”⁷² *Justice* dictates that the recompense for the death of the God-man be redirected to someone else and the natural suggestion is that it go to humanity. Anselm pushes further and argues that it is not just natural or fitting that the gift go to humanity, but *justice* drives him to this conclusion: “*quos iustius faciet haeredes debiti quo ipse non eget, et exundantiae suae plenitudinis, quam parentes et fratres suos, quos aspicit tot et tantis debitis obligatos egestate tabescere in profundo*

⁶⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 130).

⁷⁰ Again, note the contrast between the *justice* and power of God.

⁷¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 130).

⁷² Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 130).

miseriarum.”⁷³ The gift would allow for the salvation of humanity by providing repayment for the debt owed by humanity to the honor of God. Anselm reiterates that the God-man was not compelled to do this by anything other than consistency with divine truth and the divine nature (“*ita veritas immutabilis exigebat*”, “*propter unitatem personae*”, “*qui per peccatum deum offenderat, per iustitiam satisfaceret*”).⁷⁴ He brings his argument back to its starting point contra the devil-ransom theory when he concludes that human salvation was not a God-devil matter, but a God-human matter:

*deus tamen non egebat ut de caelo descenderet ad vincendum diabolum, neque ut per iustitiam ageret contra illum ad liberandum hominem; sed ab homine deus exigebat ut diabolum vinceret, et qui per peccatum deum offenderat, per iustitiam satisfaceret. Siquidem diabolo nec deus aliquid debebat nisi poenam, nec homo nisi vicem, ut ab illo victus illum revinceret; sed quidquid ab illo exigebatur, hoc deo debebat non diabolo.*⁷⁵

In the same way that divine *justice* orchestrated the actions of God with relation to humanity in reaction to the first human sin, Anselm argues that *justice* is critical to closing the loop on the issue as humanity is reconciled to God through the actions of the God-man. In all of this, Anselm is clear that the devil takes no more than a side role as, at best, an *agent provocateur* who is defeated in the end. Following the path of *justice* shows that the victory over the devil is secondary to the reconciliation between God and humanity.⁷⁶

Anselm concludes his discussion of *justice* in the CDH with a chapter that at once crystallizes his understanding of divine *justice* and mercy while also providing fodder for

⁷³ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 130-131).

⁷⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 131).

⁷⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 131).

⁷⁶ Much to the chagrin of critics such as Aulén who prioritize the defeat of the devil over all other aspects of human salvation.

critics who see him as too drastically opposing divine mercy and *justice*. He trumpets how great and just is divine mercy (“*Quam magna et quam iusta misericordia dei*”⁷⁷) in light of the self-offering of the God-man in order to save humanity from the condemnation of eternal death. To his critics, Anselm’s association of divine *justice* with the condemnation of humans to eternal torments indicates that he focuses too much on *justice* in the CDH. However, Anselm’s position is that extremes of *justice* only reveal extremes of mercy. This is because God’s action is supremely unified. Even though Anselm and anyone else can discuss the condemnation of humanity to death that is the result of sin in isolation from the reconciliation and salvation of humanity, God cannot and does not. There is no condemnation and *justice* without corresponding redemption and mercy. This is what Anselm means when he declares “*Misericordiam vero dei... tam magnam tamque concordem iustitiae invenimus*.”⁷⁸ There is an indivisible and unbreakable concord between divine *justice* and mercy that is revealed in Anselm’s discussion of the topics in the CDH.

Anselm and His Critics on Justice

Critics of Anselm have seized on his usage of *justice* as an indication not only of an irretrievable feudal influence but also of a soteriology so fraught with violence and punishment that it is rendered intolerable. The latter argument is made by theological ethicist J. Denny Weaver in his book *The Nonviolent Atonement*. Weaver argues that a “narrative Christus Victor” motif represents the most fitting approach to the atonement in

⁷⁷ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 20 (II, 131).

⁷⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 20 (II, 131).

a contemporary pluralistic world.⁷⁹ He uses Anselm and the *CDH* as a foil and spends almost as much time criticizing Anselm (and later variations on Anselmian satisfaction theories of the atonement) as he does in building up his own positive argument for an appropriate atonement narrative. In Weaver's narrative Christus Victor approach, the purpose of the Incarnation was to make visible the reign of God in the world and the death of Jesus was committed at the hand of the evil powers of the world and ultimately demonstrated the victorious power of God over the evil powers of the world in the resurrection.⁸⁰ Weaver takes the "classic Christus Victor" approach as his starting point and maintains a significant degree of consonance with it, particularly related to the role of the devil in the sin and redemption of humanity. He considered Augustine's view of sin and redemption (and the devil-ransom theory in general) to be one variant of this classic Christus Victor motif.⁸¹ This leads Weaver to very quickly find himself at odds with Anselm since Anselm denied the devil a primary role in the sin and redemption of humanity. Weaver's goal of removing violence (especially divinely-sanctioned violence) from the atonement leads him to focus on the cause or agency behind the death of the God-man. Since Weaver would prefer to make the evil powers of the world responsible for the death of the God-man, he faults Anselm for removing them from the equation:

However, when Anselm deleted the devil from the picture for satisfaction and moral theories, the picture changed markedly. Since the divine order needs the death to satisfy the debt owed to God, and since humankind obviously cannot arrange any plan to rescue itself or to pay its debt, only God remains as the one for whom God arranged the plan by which the Son could pay the debt. And since only God can arrange the plan, the logic of

⁷⁹ J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 210-228.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 72-74.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

the salvation motif itself makes God the author of the death of Jesus in Anselm's model.⁸²

For Weaver, the idea that God could be responsible for the death of Jesus (even if it flows logically from the nature of God) is unconscionable.

Weaver examines Anselm's methodology in the *CDH* and points to *justice* as the culprit (since he correctly notices that *justice* is the moving force behind the steps of Anselm's argument):

Divine justice – God's justice – is what Jesus' death is aimed at. It is divine justice – God's justice – that needs the death of Jesus. Without the death, divine justice would not be restored. And most tellingly, God is the agent who arranged the scenario whereby Jesus could be killed so that his death would satisfy divine justice.⁸³

Weaver recognizes that Anselm makes a distinction between violent punishment and satisfaction that involves the death of the God-man in his "*aut satisfactio aut poena*" distinction.⁸⁴ However, he makes the case that Anselm is not absolved from the charge of incorporating divinely-sanctioned punishment just because he contrasts the death of the God-man with punishment of humanity: "The fact that the death is called satisfaction of 'divine justice' rather than punishment of an innocent man in place of punishing sinful humanity does not alter the fact that God is the agent behind the death."⁸⁵ For Weaver, this reveals a key assumption that results from the responsibility of humanity to make satisfaction for a debt of honor owed to God: "That assumption is that salvation, however defined, is linked to or depends on the equation of doing justice with inflicting punishment. In this case the punishment is the ultimate penalty of death. Doing justice

⁸² Ibid., 197.

⁸³ Ibid., 198.

⁸⁴ Found in various forms in Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia.*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71) and *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 74).

⁸⁵ Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement.*, 198.

or righting injustice depends on punishment.”⁸⁶ For Weaver, this is a damning point for Anselm’s argument and satisfaction arguments in general. He places the blame for centuries of erroneous, overly-violent atonement motifs on the role of *justice* in Anselm’s work and similar approaches to the atonement:

Following through the logic of the questions concerning the object of Jesus’ death and the agent of Jesus’ death shows that the quid pro quo violence of ‘doing justice means inflicting punishment’ is just as true for Anselm’s version as for the penal substitutionary variant that developed in the Reformed tradition. ... To then say that God the Father killed Jesus in order to pay the debt, and that the killing of Jesus is a model of divine child abuse may be a provocative image – but it flows from the logic of satisfaction atonement itself.⁸⁷

Weaver’s criticism here has been echoed by other scholars who continue to find fault with Anselm’s use of *justice* in the *CDH* and so deserves an answer on behalf of Anselm.⁸⁸

Although Anselm likely would not share all of the same concerns that Weaver has for developing a proper atonement motif, he would nonetheless be able to make the following reply. The death of the God-man is still better than the alternative, which is punishment of all humanity. The reason it is better is that it is more consonant with the nature of God as creator to create humanity and not allow creation to cease to exist due to sin. Anselm views the destruction of humanity as the only other (theoretically) possible solution to human sin. However, given the choice of “*aut satisfactio aut poena*,” Anselm has argued that *justice* requires satisfaction and not punishment. Taking it a step further, Anselm argues that humanity cannot simply be destroyed, since some humans must

⁸⁶ Ibid., 201.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 202.

⁸⁸ For example: Lisa Sowle Cahill, “The Atonement Paradigm: Does It Still Have Explanatory Value?,” *Theological Studies* 68, no. 2 (2007).

survive to fill the ranks of heaven.⁸⁹ *Justice*, then, is opposed to human punishment, by Anselm's logic.⁹⁰

Anselm's discussion of necessity in conjunction with *justice* also indicates that God's actions are necessary because they are the best possible actions, given the nature of God. Weaver's criticism that the death of the God-man constitutes divinely-sanctioned violence would most likely be met by an Anselmian reply that even though death (and perhaps through this death even punishment) is involved, God always acts in the best way. If the death of the God-man is shown to be consistent with the nature of God, then the burden of the critic lies in showing that it is inconsistent with the nature of God and not merely that it offends the sensibilities of the critic. If the death of the God-man is the action that best corresponds to the nature of God given the situation of sin, then it is the best possible action, even if it may seem that God is somehow involved in agency or sanctioning.

While Weaver brings twentieth-century critiques to bear on Anselm's work, Foley represents the critiques of the textbook histories of doctrine from the nineteenth century. These criticisms (by the likes of Harnack and Ritschl) shaped the reception of Anselm by generations of theology students well into the twentieth century (including Weaver, though perhaps indirectly). Foley's work builds on the textbook analyses and offers a more detailed and nuanced critique of Anselm's atonement theory in the *CDH*. As noted earlier, Foley argues that Anselm over-emphasizes *justice* at the expense of the mercy

⁸⁹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*. *CDH* lib. I, cap. 25 (II, 95). I believe this is Anselm's rationale for including Book I, chapters 16-18. Otherwise, he does not have a strong answer to why humanity should be saved at all.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71).

and love of God.⁹¹ Foley seems to understand that the nature of God influenced the actions of God, but he also seems to overlook Anselm's understanding of divine simplicity, which prevents Anselm from making a sharp distinction between the attributes of God. With regard to the obligation of maintaining the honor of God, he argues that "this obligation was not to His nature of love, but to His attribute of justice. If infinite justice demands its due, what sphere of activity has infinite love?"⁹² Foley attributes Anselm's reliance on *justice* at the expense of love to the latter's feudal context and uses the example of the relationship between Father and Son:

The juristic conception of satisfaction belonged also to a time when a child's relation to his father was severely legal, and was made more natural to Anselm by the fact that the Norman was 'a born lawyer.' Thus his doctrine, as all succeeding forms of it, was 'shot through with colours drawn from the corruption of Roman society, from the Roman sense of authority and the Roman forms of justice.'⁹³

As discussed earlier, this has become a standard line in criticism of Anselm, even when critics acknowledge that Anselm's work in the *CDH* can be consistently re-stated without reference to feudal imagery. Foley here connects the argument that Anselm is too reliant on *justice* at the expense of mercy and love with the argument that Anselm's feudal context leads him to interject an extra-Biblical framework. I would argue that if Foley were to take seriously Anselm's understanding of *justice* as standing for the consistency of the divine nature with itself, he would come to a different conclusion.

Foley finds fault with Anselm's use of *justice* for what he perceives to be an over-emphasis on legalism. He focuses on instances when Anselm discusses punishment in relation to *justice* and draws the following conclusion: "This hard mechanical legality is

⁹¹ Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement*, 166, 174.

⁹² Ibid., 166.

⁹³ Ibid., 167.

completely unethical and unspiritual, because morally impersonal. It contains no revelation of the heart of God, and has no relation to the personal life of conscience and obedience: it is technical and subtle like a lawyer's brief, external to the needs and moral activities of the human soul."⁹⁴ It seems obvious that Foley views Anselm's use of *justice* to be similar to (if not identical to) the way that Augustine (and others) used *justice* in formulating the devil-ransom theory of atonement. In the latter, *justice* stands to the side as a third-party dictating the actions of God, the devil and humanity in the aftermath of the first human sin. In that formulation, there is a "hard mechanical legality" that seems to drive the sequence of events. However, that is not the way that Anselm uses *justice*. He explicitly repudiates the devil-ransom theory on account of its erroneous use of *justice* and moves in a different direction. *Justice* still drives the logical sequence of events for Anselm in the *CDH*, but it does so by appealing to the consistency of the divine nature. In this way, then, Anselm's *justice* is perfectly consonant with the heart of God and is both ethical and spiritual.

Foley takes his argument further and compares (unfavorably) Anselm's use of *justice* to that of others such as Paul and Athanasius. Since this work focuses on Patristic analogues in the *CDH*, it is appropriate to address Foley's contrast between Anselm and Athanasius. Foley makes the following case with regard to Anselm's explanation of human salvation:

There is no necessary relation of the Son of God to man, as Athanasius taught, - no solidarity between Him and mankind; He is a mere incidental auxiliary, literally a *deus ex machina*; and the reward which He assigns to sinners is something exterior to Himself, and not therefore as in the Scriptures something of His very life and self. All that such a transaction can do is to establish for us a legal *status* with God; it can never initiate a

⁹⁴ Ibid., 169.

moral salvation, for it is almost destitute of moral implications. But the relationship between man and God is exclusively moral, and to make it purely legal is to miss the essential point in the need for a work of redemption.⁹⁵

However, Athanasius himself makes frequent use of legal terminology in explaining the motivation and rationale for the Incarnation. Although he does not specifically refer to *justice* as frequently as Anselm does, he makes it clear that the activities of the Incarnation happened the way that they did because they were consistent with the nature of God. Athanasius points out that the law of God reflected the order of God and God was consistent with His own order:

For indeed, as I said above, by the law death thenceforth prevailed over us. And it was impossible to flee the law, since this had been established by God because of the transgression. And these events were truly at once absurd and improper. For it was absurd that, having spoken, God should lie, in that he had established a law that man would die by death if he were to transgress the commandment, and man did not die after he had transgressed, but God's word was made void. For God would not have been truthful, if after he had said we would die, man had not died.⁹⁶

For Athanasius, the Incarnation reflected the consistency of God with God's own nature, similar to the way that Anselm argued from *justice* that the events of the Incarnation happened the way that they did because they were most consistent with the divine nature. I contend that both Athanasius and Anselm would argue that the legal or just mechanisms of the Incarnation do not obviate the ethical or spiritual aspects of the Incarnation, as Foley claims. The two concerns are not necessarily opposed to one another. As Athanasius pointed out in face of the desire that human beings not be destroyed by corruption, God would not save humanity and violate the principles of the divine nature

⁹⁵ Ibid., 170-171.

⁹⁶ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Robert W. Thomson, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 147-149 (DI 6).

at the same time: “But as this had to be, so again on the other hand lies opposed to it what was reasonable for God, that he should appear truthful in passing the law about death. For it would have been absurd that for our benefit and permanence God, the Father of truth, should appear a liar.”⁹⁷ The relationship and solidarity between God and humanity that Foley saw in Athanasius occurred within a context that valued consistency with the divine nature and was explained in legal terms. There is no reason why Anselm’s work cannot be viewed similarly as valuing consistency with the divine nature and explained in terms of *justice*.

The Influence of Scripture

The examination of Anselm’s use of *justice* has shown a dedication of Anselm to the sovereignty and consistency of God. *Justice* is not an external principle to which the actions of God conform, but *justice* stands for the nature of God, which is consistent across all of its attributes (*justice*, power, mercy, knowledge, etc.). Anselm appeals to *justice* to make the argument that human sin and salvation are a matter of concern between humans and God, leaving the devil off to the side as a third-party and not a major player (as Augustine and others portrayed him in variations of the devil-ransom theory of atonement). The *justice* of God drives the logic of human salvation for Anselm and he argues that the necessity and actions of the God-man are ordered by *justice*. Whereas some critics have pointed to Anselm’s use of *justice* as indicative of the influence of feudalism on Anselm, I would argue that Anselm’s use of *justice* is closer to patristic and scriptural analogues. Having already discussed Athanasius’ work on the subject, I now turn to the influence of scripture.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 149 (DI 7).

F.S. Schmitt made note of 85 references to 57 different scripture locations throughout the *CDH*. Of these, there are only eight references that directly relate to Anselm's discussion of *justice*.

Table – Schmitt Scriptural References for *Justice* Passages

CDH	Schmitt ⁹⁸	Reference	Text
I.3	51:5-7	Romans 5:19	<i>sicut enim per inoboedientiam unius hominis peccatores constituti sunt multi ita et per unius oboeditionem iusti constituentur multi</i>
I.11	68:16	Psalms 35:11	<i>praetende misericordiam tuam scientibus te et iustitiam tuam his qui recto sunt corde</i>
I.18	78:30	Acts 10:35	<i>sed in omni gente qui timet eum et operatur iustitiam acceptus est illi</i>
I.18	79:28	2 Peter 3:13	<i>novos vero caelos et novam terram et promissa ipsius expectamus in quibus iustitia habitat</i>
I.20	88:1-2	Ezekiel 18:27	<i>et cum averterit se impius ab impietate sua quam operatus est et fecerit iudicium et iustitiam ipse animam suam vivificabit</i>
I.20	88:2	Ezekiel 18:22	<i>omnium iniquitatum eius quas operatus est non recordabor in iustitia sua quam operatus est vivet</i>
I.20	88:2	Ezekiel 33:16	<i>omnia peccata eius quae peccavit non inputabuntur ei iudicium et iustitiam fecit vita vivet</i>
I.24	94:11-12	Psalms 35:7-8	<i>iustitia tua sicut montes Dei iudicia tua abyssus multa homines et iumenta salvabis Domine;</i>

Of these references, the one most relevant to Anselm's use of *justice* is the reference to Psalm 35:11 in book I, chapter 11. This is the point at which Anselm argues that living a just life is the way in which human beings honor God. The life of *justice* is defined as “*iustos facit sive rectos corde, id est voluntate.*”⁹⁹ This is the same “*rectos corde*” that is found in Psalm 35:11. The fact that he modified “*rectos corde*” by adding “*id est*

⁹⁸ References to Schmitt are to volume 2 of the critical edition in Page:Line(s) format. Scripture references are to the Vulgate, following the LXX number for Psalms references.

⁹⁹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

voluntate” indicates that he was making a reference to Psalm 35:11 and incorporating it into his understanding of *justice* that he had already defined as “*rectitudo voluntati*” in *De Veritate*.¹⁰⁰

The pairing of mercy and *justice* in verse 11 is a theme for the whole Psalm and the natural pairing of the two can be found in a similar way in book II, chapter 20 of the *CDH*. Anselm was committed to the consistency of divine mercy with divine *justice*. Just as David extols God’s mercy and *justice* in the same breath, Anselm finds both at once in the love of God for humanity and the salvation of humanity by God. The fact that he titled this chapter “*Quam magna et quam iusta sit misericordia dei*”¹⁰¹ strongly implies that Anselm was influenced by the understanding of *justice* (and mercy) that is found in the Psalms. The acclamation of the mercy and *justice* of God is similar to not only Psalm 35, but also to similar passages elsewhere in Psalms:

Psalm 84:11 – “*misericordia et veritas obviaverunt sibi iustitia et pax osculatae sunt*”

Psalm 88:15 – “*iustitia et iudicium praeparatio sedis tuae misericordia et veritas praecedent faciem tuam*”

Psalm 102:17 – “*misericordia autem Domini ab aeterno et usque in aeternum super timentes eum et iustitia illius in filios filiorum*”

Psalm 111:4 – “*exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis misericors et miserator et iustus*”

Psalm 114:5 – “*misericors Dominus et iustus et Deus noster miseretur*”

These verses paint a picture of a divine *justice* that does not exist without divine mercy.

Anselm’s concerted effort at the end of book II of the *CDH* not only answers Boso’s concern that the mercy of God might have been dead, but it also indicates that Anselm’s

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., *De Veritate* cap. 12 (I, 194).

¹⁰¹ The chapter titles are believed to be Anselm’s own, assuming one accepts (as I do) the authenticity of the *Praefatio* that Schmitt included in his *Opera Omnia* following the Commendation to Pope Urban II.

understanding of *justice* was informed (and perhaps strongly so) by the use of *justice* in the Psalms.

Final Thoughts on Justice

In the *CDH*, Anselm uses *justice* in a way that is much larger and richer than any so-called feudal understanding of *justice*. What began as a reaction against the way that Augustine used *justice* in the devil-ransom theory of atonement grew into an argument impelled by the necessary consequences of sin in the context of the nature of God. Anselm had a clearly developed understanding of the nature of God as perfectly simple and as *justice* itself. So, in the face of suggestions that God conform to an external principle of *justice* or that divine attributes such as mercy or love were somehow opposed to divine *justice*, Anselm was able to consistently argue that these assertions were not founded in logic – a strong argument since logic reflects the divine nature. His own position was strongly influenced by neo-Platonic sources (including Augustine) and scripture (particularly the Psalms). This left him with an understanding of the role of *justice* in the Incarnation and Atonement that was more consistent with scriptural and patristic sources than feudal and legal usages of *justice*.¹⁰²

¹⁰² See also Katherin A. Rogers, *The Neoplatonic Metaphysics and Epistemology of Anselm of Canterbury*, vol. 45, *Studies in History of Philosophy* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997). The enormous influence of neo-Platonism on patristic writers is well-established and Anselm does not seem to be far from them.

Chapter 4

Debt

Among the putatively feudal terms under consideration in this work, Anselm used *debitum* and its variants, including *debeo*, *-ere*, more frequently than any other (approximately 245 times¹). He used it to speak explicitly about the concept of a debt and what humanity owes to God. Additionally, though, he employed the term throughout the work to convey ideas of obligation, rightness, necessity and what one ought to do. He used the term so profusely that it will be important to distinguish both uniqueness and commonality of usage between the technical and the mundane uses of the term. That is, there are places where his use of *debeo* is appropriate for the subject under consideration, but there are other places where it stands out and it is clear that Anselm is purposely employing the term with added theological meaning. In this chapter, I will examine the variations in usage that Anselm employs with the term *debt* and its variants. I will then examine what he means by *debt*, who owes the *debt* and how the *debt* gets repaid. In order to place Anselm's usage in context, I will examine the scriptural and patristic precedent for using *debt* in soteriological contexts. I will then contrast this traditional usage with the supposedly feudal implications Anselm's usage of *debt* has in the words of his critics. I will conclude by arguing that Anselm was simply using the most appropriate term available to him when he expressed the obligation of humanity to God in terms of

¹ See Appendix A.

debt. I will argue that Anselm was not unaware of his cultural context in his usage, but that he was intentional about the way that he used *debt* and the way that his readers would understand his usage.

Debt

Anselm used *debitum* to refer to a *debt*, debtor, indebtedness, etc. in less than 20 percent of the usage under consideration in this chapter. The context for his usage is almost always that of the *debt* owed by humanity to God. Anselm first discusses this in book I, chapter 11:

- A. *Non est itaque aliud peccare quam non reddere deo debitum.*
- B. *Quod est debitum quod deo debemus?*
- A. *Omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei.*
- B. *Nihil verius.*
- A. *Hoc est debitum quod debet angelus et homo deo, quod solvendo nullus peccat, et quod omnis qui non solvit peccat.*²

Here, Anselm places humanity in *debt* to God from the moment of creation. As mentioned in the earlier discussion of honor, the Creator-creation relationship imposes a *debt* of honor on humanity, since humans owe their entire being to God. Anselm focuses on the human will and argues that the whole will of rational creation (meaning angels and humans, though Anselm's focus here and through most of the *CDH* is on humans) must be subjected to God. For Anselm, if the human will is subject to God, then this entails obedience to God (he does not discuss/consider the possibility of the will being subjected to God without corresponding actions of obedience). By virtue of having been created by God, humans must will and act in accordance with God. Anselm characterizes the force of the obligation on the part of humanity in terms of a *debt*.

² Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938), *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

It is clear that Boso takes the image of the debt seriously, given his question in book I, chapter 19: “*Sed quid est quod dicimus deo: ‘dimitte nobis debita nostra’, et omnis gens orat deum quem credit, ut dimittat sibi peccata? Si enim solvimus quod debemus: cur oramus ut dimittat? Numquid deus iniustus est, ut iterum exigat quod solutum est?*”³ While Anselm rightly puts off a full response to the line of questioning until later in the work, the passage offers insight into the way that Anselm is using “debt.” First, there is the clear reference to Jesus’ own usage of the term in the passage from Matthew chapter six commonly known as the Lord’s Prayer.⁴ Anselm is strongly influenced by the characterization of sin as a debt that humans must ask God to forgive. This kind of scriptural precedent would have provided a certainty for Anselm’s usage that would have defied any questioning of the sort that critics have raised against the supposedly “too economic” or “too feudal” term. I would argue, then, that Anselm did not choose to employ the term “debt” for any specific culturally-defined reason or even out of arbitrariness. Rather, his starting point was the scriptural precedent and he developed further meaning of the term from that point onward. Even beyond the quoted portion from Matthew 6:12 is the unmentioned second half to the verse: “*sicut et nos dimisimus debitoribus nostris.*” There is a clear relationship between the *debt* of sin owed by humanity to God and the *debts*, offences and sins among human beings themselves. The intention of the Lord’s Prayer seems to be that intra-human forgiveness of sin should model the forgiveness imparted by God. If Jesus found the image of a *debt* to be versatile and comprehensive enough to apply to divine-human and human-human

³ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 19 (II, 86).

⁴ Schmitt connects Anselm’s use with that of Matthew 6:12 twice – in book I, chapters 12 and 19. See the notes to pages 69 and 86 of his edition.

relationships, Anselm seems to think the same way. So, when Boso questions why one should pray for forgiveness of *debts* even after the salvific work of Christ, he seems to be motivated by his human experience with *debts* and trying to correctly apply it to the divine-human relationship. Anselm defers a full answer to Boso until later in the work, but he does note that the continued prayer for forgiveness reflects the difference in relationship types: “*non expedit homini ut agat cum deo, quemadmodum par cum pari.*”⁵ There may be a common language of *debt*, but there is a difference in meaning due to the different relationship contexts.

Anselm raises the topic of the *debt* of sin again in book I, chapter 24 as he assesses the ability of humanity to pay the debt without assistance from God. Anselm earlier explained that no human born under normal circumstances is capable of paying the *debt* and now Boso questions how humans can be held responsible for paying the *debt* if they are inherently incapable of doing so. In his reply, Anselm employs an analogy that draws on a human-human relationship:

*Nam si quis iniungat opus aliquod servo suo, et praecipiat illi ne se deiciat in foveam quam illi monstrat, unde nullatenus exire possit, et servus ille contemnens mandatum et monitionem domini sui sponte se in monstratam mittat foveam, ut nullatenus possit opus iniunctum efficere: putasne illi aliquatenus impotentiam istam ad excusationem valere, cur opus iniunctum non faciat?*⁶

Anselm uses the example to show that an incapacity to satisfy a *debt* does not excuse someone from the obligation to repay it, therefore humanity is fully responsible for the *debt* of sin even though no human being is able to repay it. At this point, it appears that Anselm is making a correlation between a master-slave human relationship and the

⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 19 (II, 86).

⁶ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 92).

divine-human relationship. However, the relationship between the individuals involved is not essential to the point of the analogy. Whether it is master-slave, teacher-student, parent-child, the willed incapacity⁷ by the one who owes obedience remains the same. The level of obligation between the two individuals (whether forced, convenient, familial or some other) is not relevant to the point that Anselm is trying to make. So, although the language of Anselm's example may *fit* the feudal context in which he was writing, it was not a necessary element to the point that he was making with regard to the nature of the *debt* owed by humans to God.

In the same chapter, Anselm also discusses human sin as a *debt* to God in the context of potential forgiveness out of divine mercy. Anselm himself raises the issue in anticipation of the question about whether God could or should simply forgive humanity's debt of sin in the name of mercy. However, Anselm argues that this kind of mercy would transfer the incapacity from humans to God and it is inappropriate to attribute any sort of incapacity to God: "*Sed si dimittit quod sponte reddere debet homo, ideo quia reddere non potest, quid est aliud quam: dimittit deus quod habere non potest? Sed derisio est, ut talis misericordia deo attribatur.*"⁸ Once again, Anselm highlights the difference between God and humanity on the understanding of *debt*. When a human forgives a *debt* out of mercy, it is usually considered to be an act of beneficence. To forgo monetary gain to the benefit of someone else is a virtue that is lauded explicitly in scripture.⁹ However, God is not able to simply give up something of His. Since the *debt*

⁷ The use of "willed" here is meant to reflect the fact that the incapacity is not merely a natural deficit that is inescapable. Rather, the one who owes has intentionally acted in some way that resulted in an incapacity. Compare with the "willed obedience" of the God-man (discussed later in this chapter).

⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 93).

⁹ See, for example, the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant in Matthew 18:23-35.

is not anything physical or monetary, but is the honor of His being (as discussed in an earlier chapter), God cannot simply forgive a *debt*. As Anselm points out, this would result in the irrational situation of God relinquishing part of His being. Again, Anselm uses *debt* in a way that is comparable to strictly human usage of *debt*, but there is not a direct correlation. In this case, merciful forgiveness of a *debt* does not carry over through the use of analogy.

In book II, Anselm uses his understanding of *debt* to describe the purpose and activity of the God-man. Anselm has already established the parameters of the *debt* owed by humanity and it is clear that the God-man must be able to satisfy that *debt*. However, he pushes further in book II, chapter 11: “*Ratio quoque nos docuit quia oportet eum maius aliquid habere, quam quidquid sub deo est, quod sponte det et non ex debito deo.*”¹⁰ As large as the *debt* of sin is and as necessary as its repayment is, Anselm argues that there must be something given above and beyond the repayment of the *debt*. The context seems to suggest that Anselm is motivated here by a desire to show the supreme voluntariness of the activity of the God-man. Not only is the God-man capable and willing to pay the *debt* on behalf of humanity, he gives something over and above what was owed. This is not a simple thing to define, though, since it must be something that is both “*maior...quidquid sub deo est*” and “*in ipso.*”¹¹ Since the God-man would owe His nature and being (everything “*in ipso*”) to God by virtue of the *debt* that all humans owe, this gift that is offered by the God-man must be something that is not owed. Anselm then suggests handing over the life of the God-man in death, since this would not be something owed by Him: “*Hoc enim ex debito non exiget deus ab illo; quoniam namque*

¹⁰ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 110).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 110).

non erit peccatum in illo, non debebit mori, sicut diximus.”¹² Not only is death something that is not owed by the God-man to God, but it is the only action that the God-man can undertake perfectly freely. The *debt* of honor owed to God makes all of human life an obligation to God. However, death is outside the realm of this *debt* and it is the only activity under the control of a human being that can be willed without obligation. Sin brought humanity under obligation even in death, but since the God-man is sinless, he is under no obligation with regard to death. Anselm also points out that handing one’s self over to death is the most difficult and highest act of self-giving possible by a human being: “*Nihil autem asperius aut difficilius potest homo ad honorem dei sponte et non ex debito pati quam mortem, et nullatenus se ipsum potest homo dare magis deo, quam cum se morti tradit ad honorem illius.*”¹³ Thus, the God-man freely wills to undergo the most painful of human processes in order to offer something above and beyond the *debt* owed by human beings to God.¹⁴ Anselm is careful to explain what is included in the *debt* owed by humanity and what is not included in that *debt* so that he makes room for the God-man to offer something above and beyond what He would ordinarily owe.

In chapter 18 of book II, Anselm’s discussion of *debt* rises to a crescendo. In this chapter, which contains nearly 20 percent of the usage of all variants of *debeo*, *-ere*, Anselm brings together the concepts of *debt*, obligation, owing and ought in the crux of his argument for the necessity and efficacy of the God-man. Here, he also explicitly considers the meaning of these concepts and how they interact with each other. With

¹² Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

¹³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

¹⁴ The fact that Anselm characterizes the death of the God-man as wholly voluntary and above and beyond the demands of what was owed by Him as a human being reinforces the Anselmian answer to the critique that the death of the God-man constitutes unjust punishment (as discussed in the previous chapter). Anselm takes pains to emphasize the involvement, even supremacy, of the free will of the God-man in this activity.

regard to the specific concept of *debt*, he is again careful to distinguish between what should and should not be characterized as a *debt* for God. He begins by restating his core premise that the *debt* is so large as to put it beyond the reach of human ability: “*debitum tantum erat, ut illud solvere, cum non deberet nisi homo, non posset nisi deus, ita ut idem esset homo qui deus.*”¹⁵ The large *debt* owed by humanity was an obligation that was impossible to fulfill and Anselm contrasts this situation with the fulfillment made by the God-man that was completely free of obligation: “*Nullus umquam homo moriendo praeter illum deo dedit quod aliquando necessitate perditurus non erat, aut solvit quod non debebat. Ille vero sponte patri obtulit quod nulla necessitate umquam amissurus erat, et solvit pro peccatoribus quod pro se non debebat.*”¹⁶ Anselm consistently emphasizes the fact that, although the God-man paid the *debt* of sin for humanity, it was not something that He owed in any way. Furthermore, as seen in the previous section on his usage in book II, chapter 11, it is just because the payment was not owed but voluntary that it was sufficiently efficacious to provide for the salvation of humanity. The fact that the God-man freely wills to pay the *debt* permits one to say that it ought to have happened that way, but Anselm differentiates that voluntariness from owing a debt: “*Dominus itaque IESUS cum mortem, sicut diximus, sustinere voluit, quoniam sum erat et pati et non pati, debuit facere quod fecit, quia quod voluit fieri debuit; et non debuit facere, quia non ex debito.*”¹⁷ It is clear, then, that Anselm views a *debt* as something that is owed, but the payment is not restricted to the one(s) “owing” the *debt*.

¹⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 126-127).

¹⁶ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 127).

¹⁷ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 129).

Owing

Anselm is both intentional and specific in the way that he uses the term *debt*. However, he uses the same root in different ways to convey similar meanings without explicitly referencing the concept of a *debt*. The most obvious of these instances is when he discusses owing and to owe (*debeo*, *-ere*). In many cases, Anselm combines the two terms and “owing” is inseparable from “*debt*.” Book I, chapter 11 is a perfect example of this, in which Anselm discusses what rational creatures owe to God: “*Quod est debitum quod deo debemus? ... Hoc est debitum quod debet angelus et homo deo, quod solvendo nullus peccat, et quod omnis qui non solvit peccat.*”¹⁸ This clearly connects the relationality of “owing” to the idea of *debt*. However, I would argue that one can learn more about what Anselm believes human beings owe to God by examining his use of “owing” than by his usage of “*debt*” itself. I would like to explore some of these examples in the following section.

Anselm discusses the willed obedience¹⁹ of the God-man to death in book I, chapter 9 through the lens of scriptures from the New Testament. Anselm re-casts the obligations of human beings to God in response to Paul’s discussion of obedience in the second chapter of Philippians:

- A. *Cur persecuti sunt eum Iudaei usque ad mortem?*
- B. *Non ob aliud, nisi quia veritatem et iustitiam vivendo et loquendo indeclinabiliter tenebat.*
- A. *Hoc puto quia deus ab omni rationali creatura exigit, et hoc illa per oboedientiam deo debet.*²⁰

¹⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68). Other examples include book I, chapter 24 and book II, chapters 18 and 19.

¹⁹ By this I mean the intentional assent to the divine plan that involved the death of the God-man. This may be contrasted (although Anselm does not explicitly do so) with the aforementioned “willed incapacity” that prevents human beings affected by sin from paying the debt of sin.

²⁰ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 9 (II, 61).

Although Anselm elsewhere describes this universal human obligation as a *debt*, he is clearly influenced by the idea of a relationship of obedience. While the truth and righteousness owed to God may be characterized as a *debt*, the way that they are owed is through (“*per*”) obedience. This speaks to the nature of the “owing” relationship between God and humanity, similar to the way that Anselm expressed that relationship through the use of “honor.”²¹ Anselm makes a connection between “honor” and “owing” in book I, chapter 14 when he discusses the way that God’s honor is always maintained, regardless of whether or not humans supply it willingly:

*Deum impossibile est honorem suum perdere. Aut enim peccator sponte solvit quod debet, aut deus ab invito accipit. Nam aut homo debitam subiectionem deo sive non peccando sive quod peccat solvendo, voluntate spontanea exhibet, aut deus eum invitum sibi torquendo subicit et sic se dominum eius esse ostendit, quod ipse homo voluntate fateri recusat.*²²

The “submission owed to God” (*debitam subiectionem deo*) reflects the same concept of owing through obedience that is found in book I, chapter 9. It should be noted that both of these discussions of “owing” refer to what humans owe to God by virtue of the Creator-creation relationship. The vocabulary here is one of “owing” but the emphasis is not on the “debt,” or the “what is owed.” The owing reflects the relationship (the “how”) and, in this case, the relationship is defined by virtue of “being” – Creator and creation. Anselm emphasizes obedience and submission to indicate that the *debt* is not to be viewed as something negative, but simply a reflection of the natural order.

While Anselm primarily speaks of “owing” in the context of the divine-human relationship, sin and redemption, Anselm also uses the idea of “owing” to make a point

²¹ See chapter 2 of this work.

²² Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 14 (II, 72).

about the gratitude humanity should feel toward God, if the salvation of humanity was accomplished due to necessity. Boso asks in book II, chapter 5: “*quam gratiam illi debemus pro eo quod facit propter se? Quomodo etiam imputabimus nostrum salutem eius gratiae, si nos salvat necessitate?*”²³ If the God-man was a necessary means for a process of human salvation that was necessary in and of itself, why ought humans feel any gratitude toward God for what was done? Anselm expresses this by questioning what gratitude or thanks we human beings owe to God for this. Clearly this is a case in which Anselm uses the idea of “owing” without referring to a *debt* being owed.²⁴ I would argue that this is an indication that “owing” is simply one way of expressing obligation for Anselm. This is illustrated later on in this same chapter when he uses the example of someone who makes a vow about holy living. He comments that such a person is under an obligation after having made the vow: “*Quamvis namque servare illud ex necessitate post votum debeat, ne apostatae damnationem incurrat...*”²⁵ In this case, he includes “*ex necessitate*” to add force to the obligation that he conveys here. Although a vow made to God is something one ought to complete once made, it is not the same as obediently maintaining righteousness or making recompense for sin. Yet, the language of “owing” and “obligation” is appropriate (though not necessary). Anselm’s usage is indicative that he was paying close attention to what humanity “ought” and “ought not” do with regard to God. There are *debts* owed and there are also obligations, which is the meaning of *debeo* that will be under consideration in the following section.

²³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap 5 (II, 99).

²⁴ Except perhaps via an English colloquialism “debt of obligation” or, in this case, a “debt of gratitude.” Indeed, “debt of gratitude” is used in this section by the translator of the *CDH* in *The Major Works*.

²⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. II, cap. 5 (II, 100).

Obligation

In addition to *debt* and owing, Anselm uses forms of *debeo* to express the concept of obligation.²⁶ In this sense, there is a middle ground of meaning between “ought” and “must.” He seems to use it in a distinct sense to convey the action(s) incumbent upon someone due to a contingent event, usually a result of a free-will choice made by someone. The first example of this arises in book I, chapter 7, in the discussion of the devil-ransom theory of atonement. By Anselm’s reckoning, the devil-ransom theory holds that “*deum...debuisset prius per iustitiam contra diabolum agere, ut liberaret hominem, quam per fortitudinem...*”²⁷ Anselm takes issue with the degree of obligation attributed to God by the proponents of this theory. He explicitly rejects the idea that God can be constrained by or have any obligation to any other being by virtue of His status as the Creator of all else that exists. Anselm views obligation as a form of owing to which one has assented. This is distinct from a *debt* or situation of owing that may exist due to one’s nature or to natural law. Anselm makes this clear by way of an example: “*Evenit enim ut aliquis innocentem iniuste percutiat, unde ipse iuste percuti mereatur. Si tamen percussus vindicare se non debet et percutit percutientem se, iniuste hoc facit. Haec igitur percussio ex parte percutientis est iniusta quia non debuit se vindicare; ex parte vero percussi iusta, quia iniuste percutiens iuste percuti meruit.*”²⁸ Someone can place themselves under an obligation that can change normal circumstances. This is not necessarily something that they “ought” to do or “must” do, but it is incumbent on someone to carry through once the choice has been made to commit one’s self in this

²⁶ Generally, Anselm uses *debeo* in the perfect and imperfect tenses to convey the concept of obligation. In this way, it is indicative of a *debt* or something owed to which one has committed himself.

²⁷ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 7 (II, 55).

²⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 7 (II, 57).

way. This is why Anselm rejects the devil-ransom theory so emphatically, since he does not believe that God could have or would have obligated Himself to any being in any way.

In book II, chapter 10, Anselm expresses the idea of obligation by employing the phrase “*ex debito*.” With regard to the God-man, he sets out to investigate “*utrum autem ille homo moriturus sit ex debito, sicut omnes alii homines ex debito moriuntur*.”²⁹ All human beings are obligated to die, so the question is whether this obligation applies even to the God-man. Anselm makes it clear that the human obligation of death is directly related to sin and not part of original created human nature. The God-man is not obligated to die, since it is possible to assume a sinless human nature. There is also no obligation in the sense that the God-man did not choose to sin and so death is not incumbent upon Him. In the following chapter, Anselm emphasizes that the omnipotence of the God-man allows Him to freely choose to live or die: “*Poterit igitur numquam mori si volet, et poterit mori et resurgere*.”³⁰ This unrestricted power is inseparable from the unrestricted divine will, allowing the God-man to choose death instead of dying by virtue of obligation. The God-man bypassed an obligated death by directly choosing death instead of sinning or assuming a sinful nature. The latter would constitute a limitation of the divine nature, which is impossible. Thus, Anselm concludes (in the words of Boso): “*illum hominem quem quaerimus, talem esse oportere qui nec ex necessitate moriatur, quia omnipotens erit, nec ex debito, quia numquam peccator erit, et mori possit ex libera*

²⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 10 (II, 106). The fact that Anselm transitions into this chapter by writing “*nunc investigare debemus*” (which I omitted from the above quotation for the sake of clarity) is indicative of the frequency of his usage of forms of *debeo*. Clearly he is using “*ex debito*” and “*debemus*” in different ways even in the same sentence.

³⁰ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 110).

voluntate, quia necessarium erit.”³¹ Not only does Anselm make it clear that there is no obligation involved in the death of the God-man, he also contrasts obligation with divine freedom. He rules out “*ex necessitate*” and “*ex debito*” as causes of the death of the God-man and asserts that, instead, the God-man hands himself over to death “*ex libera*.” For Anselm, then, God is never obligated for anything – divine actions (including those of the God-man) are executed freely.

Ought

The final way that Anselm used *debeo* and its forms was to express the idea of “ought.” This is the most common usage in the *CDH*, comprising just over 30 percent of the instances of *debeo*. Whereas Anselm was unwilling to apply any obligation to God or the God-man, he wrote concerning what God or the God-man “ought” to do just as frequently as he wrote of what humans “ought” to do. However, as will be made clear in the following section, Anselm carefully couches his language in ways to make it clear that divine sovereignty is never comprised. At the same time, though, Anselm utilizes *debeo* as a common part of his vocabulary to express ideas and concepts without any technical or theological meaning. For example, he opens the *CDH* by offering the following disclaimer: “*quamvis a sanctis patribus inde quod sufficere debeat dictum sit.*”³² He was not attempting to replace the work of those theologians before him, since what they had written ought to be sufficient. This is a general statement made outside of the context of the argument and shows that he employed *debeo* in non-technical as well as technical usages. Aside from this usage of *debeo* as “ought,” though, I would like to explore in the following section the ways that Anselm uses “ought” in what seems to be

³¹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 11 (II, 111).

³² Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 1 (II, 48).

intentional efforts to explore common orientations between God and humanity with regard to the Incarnation.

With regard to humanity, Anselm uses “ought” in conjunction with the debt owed to God as creator: “*Omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntati dei.*”³³ He goes on to describe this as a *debt* of honor owed to God. In light of what has been discussed earlier, it is clear that Anselm has a strong view of the “ought” in this case. It could be described as necessary, since he argues that it must be corrected when it is not carried out. In this case, “ought” is interchangeable with the ideas of “debt” and “owing” since Anselm restates the premise immediately after Boso agrees to it: “*Hoc est debitum quod debet angelus et homo deo...*”³⁴ He seems to use “ought” here to express the idea that the submission of the will of rational creatures to the will of God is the ideal situation. As discussed earlier, since God wills and does the best, Anselm believes that what is ideal is also necessary, lest the will of God be violated (which is impossible). This ties in to the simple, yet telling, assertion that Anselm made to Boso in book I, chapter 8: “*Sufficere nobis debet ad rationem voluntas dei cum aliquid facit, licet non videamus cur velit. Voluntas namque dei numquam est irrationabilis.*”³⁵ “The will of God,” then, is a trump card for Anselm in any argument: if something is God’s will, then it must be, even if it does not align with human rationality. God (and God’s will) is the standard of rationality, so when there seems to be a conflict between God and rationality, God always supersedes rationality. Thus, when there is an “ought” incumbent upon

³³ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

³⁴ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II, 68).

³⁵ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 8 (II, 59).

humanity by reason of the will of God, it carries the force of necessity, due to the perfect nature and will of God.

Anselm also uses *debeo* in the sense of “ought” to articulate the right order of things as they have been ordained by God. This is clear in book I, chapter 15 when he discusses the relationship between the honor rendered to God by rational creatures and the order of the universe: “*Quas si divina sapientia, ubi perversitas rectum ordinem perturbare nititur, non adderet, fieret in ipsa universitate quam deus debet ordinare, quaedam ex violata ordinis pulchritudine deformitas, et deus in sua dispositione videtur deficere.*”³⁶ In this instance, the “ought” (“*quam deus debet ordinare*”) does not mean that God had not been ordering/regulating the universe, but Anselm means that it is right that God orders the universe. It ought to be because it is right. Anselm goes on to point out that rational creatures (above all others) have been given the gift of understanding what is right. He argues that when creatures conform to their place in the order of the universe, they do so in obedience to God, which amounts to honoring God. He goes on to explain that humans are unique with respect to this relationship due to their rationality: “*et hoc maxime rationalis natura, cui datum est intelligere quid debeat.*”³⁷ Here, I would translate “*quid debeat*” as “what is right.” Thus, in the following sentences when Anselm discusses honoring God (“*cum vult quod debet*”) and dishonoring God (“*cum vero non vult quod debet*”), he uses *debeo* to express what is right for rational creatures to do. Although one could literally translate it as “what one ought,” it is clear that what one ought to do is such because it is right. For humanity, “right” and “right order” precedes “ought.”

³⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

³⁷ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 15 (II, 73).

At the most fundamental level, then, humans “ought” to conform to the right order of creation. However, the crux of the matter for humanity is when sin enters the equation. Since sin is a violation of the right order as established by God, the question arises concerning what one “ought” to do in this case. For Anselm, the desire seems to be to return to the right order of creation as directly as possible. That process is hindered, though, by the limitations incurred by sin. Anselm addresses this in book I, chapter 24, when he discusses whether an incapacity is a valid excuse for not doing what one ought. First, he allows that an incapacity is a valid excuse if the incapacity is not the fault of the person in question: “*Forsitan si nulla est in illo causa impotentiae, aliquatenus excusari potest.*”³⁸ Yet, there seems to be a small window for this since God created the world in right order and any imperfection is the result of creatures. Inabilities or incapacities in human beings can be traced back to previous actions of human beings. So, Anselm argues that all humans find themselves in this position because all have sinned. The preponderance of the condition does not mitigate the obligation not to have it, though. Instead, it means that all humans find themselves in the same position: not doing what they ought by virtue of the fact that they have an incapacity that they ought not to have: “*Ipsa namque impotentia culpa est, quia non debet eam habere, immo debet eam non habere. ... Idem enim est non habere potestatem quam debet habere, et habere impotentiam quam debet non habere.*”³⁹ The case of a human being who cannot render complete obedience to God due to the effect of sin is the same as a human being who has the ability to provide complete obedience to God, but chooses not to do so. Essentially, Anselm argues that obedience is just as incumbent upon human beings who are born into

³⁸ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 92).

³⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 92).

sin as it was for Adam and Eve, who chose sin, even though they were perfectly free to be in complete obedience to God. He sums it up very simply when he concludes his point for Boso in the following way: “*effectum peccati non excusat peccatum quod facit.*”⁴⁰ The ultimate “ought” or responsibility for human beings, then, is to conform to their place within the right order of creation. Once they fail in this responsibility, all succeeding failures can be traced back to that one.

Anselm uses “ought” to express the responsibilities incumbent upon human beings and he also uses “ought” to convey the way(s) in which the Incarnation of the God-man ought to be carried out. He is aware, though, that he cannot always attribute “ought” to God in the same way that he can apply it to human beings. God as the Creator and Originator of all “ought” only to act according to the divine will. Unlike humans who are obligated to conform to the right order of creation, God (and, by extension, the God-man) has no such obligation, since there is never an opportunity to choose other than the best, as the divine will is always the best. Some things that may seem to be choices or open options to a human perspective are not actual choices made by God (i.e. – God does not weigh decisions on a sliding scale of good...God only does the good). Therefore, when one articulates something like “God ought to do x” or “the God-man *ought* to be y,” it is merely a case of applying human circumstances of choice and obligation to the activity of God. It is with this background in mind that Anselm delves into an intentional discussion of the applicability of “ought” to God (in comparison to the applicability of “ought” to human beings) in book II, chapter 18. Here, Boso presses Anselm to explain how the God-man gave something to God over and above what He

⁴⁰ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 24 (II, 93).

owed as a human being when, at the same time, the God-man as God always does what is best and it does not seem as though He could do more than what is best: “*Quomodo ergo asseremus eum non debuisse deo quod fecit, id est quod melius esse et magis placere deo cognovit, praesertim cum creatura debeat deo totum quod est et quod scit et potest?*”⁴¹

Anselm answers Boso by exploring the common meaning and usage of “ought,” a treatment that is unique in the *CDH*, since he tended to defer detailed answers to other works in order to focus on the argument at hand. However, since Anselm took the time to address the meaning and usage of “ought,” it is clear that he considered the discussion to be centrally important to his argument.⁴² After explaining that human beings “ought” to do what is better among the choices available to them, Anselm offers an alternative understanding of “ought” as it applies to God:

*Quod si te movet verbum quod est ‘debere,’ nec potes illud intelligere sine aliquo debito: ⁴³ scito quia sicut contingit ‘posse’ et ‘non posse’ et ‘necessitatem’ aliquando dici, non quia sunt in rebus ubi dicuntur, sed quoniam sunt in alio: ita et ‘debere.’ Quippe cum dicimus debere pauperes a divitibus eleemosynam accipere, non est aliud quam divites debere pauperibus eleemosynam impendere. Hoc namque debitum non est exigendum a paupere, sed a divite. Deus quoque dicitur omnibus debere praeesse, non quia ille in hoc aliquo modo sit debitor, sed quoniam omnia debent illi subesse; et debere facere quod vult, quoniam quod vult debet esse.*⁴⁴

Anselm sets out a rubric for “ought” in which *x* ought to do *y* for *z*. It can equally be said that *z* ought to have *y* done by *x* and that *y* ought to be done by *x* for *z*. When the idea of “owing” or “obligation” is assumed by “ought” (this is what Anselm refers to as

⁴¹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 128).

⁴² Indeed, as will be explored later in this chapter, many critics have focused on the level of obligation that Anselm ascribes to God and the God-man in the *CDH*, so it is helpful that he clarifies his intentions with regard to “ought.” It may even indicate an area in which he anticipated later critiques.

⁴³ Although *debere* and *debitum* are related, Anselm makes a distinction here between the two terms. He seems to convey the idea of “ought” without “debt,” “owing,” or “obligation.”

⁴⁴ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, *CDH* lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 128-129).

“*intelligere...debito*”), then *x* can never be God because God never “ought” to do anything in this way. But God can still be *z* so that God “ought” to have something done for Him by someone or something else. In that sense, one can truly say “God ought,” but it is a carefully conditioned statement in which God is understood to be the object of the obligation, rather than the subject. In the example that Anselm gives, God ought to be pre-eminent over all things, but that merely means that all things ought to be below/beneath God.

In addition to carefully specifying the subject and object of “ought,” Anselm also argues that “ought” is applied to God correctly when it is properly contextualized with regard to the divine will. As was alluded to earlier, what God wills is the same as what God “ought,” since God always wills and does the best. Anselm makes this connection clear in the following passage: “*Dominus itaque IESUS cum mortem, sicut diximus, sustinere voluit, quoniam suum erat et pati et non pati, debuit facere quod fecit, quia quod voluit fieri debuit; et non debuit facere, quia non ex debito.*”⁴⁵ The “ought” for God in this case is an “ought” that reflects only the divine will with no obligation, owing or *debt* involved. Ultimately, Anselm points to the sovereignty and aseity of God to explain that one can properly say that God “ought” to do something insofar as one understands that God only “ought” to do what God wills: “*nihil deberet dare nisi quod volebat; secundum personam vero sic a se ipso habebat quod habebat, et sic perfecte sibi sufficiens erat.*”⁴⁶ This is an “ought” that is profoundly different from “ought” as it applies to human beings. The perfectly free human will has the ability to choose between open options without any undue external influence. However, the perfectly free divine

⁴⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 129).

⁴⁶ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 18 (II, 129).

will always chooses and does what is best without even any option to do less than the best. Thus, God “ought” to do everything that God does since God does what He wills.⁴⁷

Hopkins’ Critique of Anselm

It is clear from the preceding discussion that Anselm’s use of *debeo* and *debitum* reflects a complicated and sophisticated understanding of the terms and their usage to express concepts of *debt*, owing, obligation and ought. While many critics of Anselm’s usage of *debt* have focused on the putatively feudal and economic contexts for this usage, few have recognized the complexity of Anselm’s usage of the term. Jasper Hopkins, though, offers a critique of Anselm’s theory that is based on the complexity of Anselm’s usage of *debeo*, particularly when Anselm uses it to mean “ought.” Hopkins analyzes Anselm’s argument thoroughly in his book *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm*.⁴⁸ His primary critique of Anselm focuses on the idea that *only* a God-man could have provided for the salvation of humanity. Hopkins seems to think that Anselm has not proven his point and has left the door open (logically) for what he calls a “non-Adamic God-man.”⁴⁹ He argues that Anselm is led astray (to the point of drawing a conclusion that is not justified) by his feudal influences (or at least feudal analogies): “It becomes increasingly clear that Anselm’s thought is influenced by the following analogy: a servant who has dishonored his good master brings disgrace upon himself and his whole family.”⁵⁰ Anselm argues that only one of Adam’s descendants can pay the *debt* of sin and Hopkins likens this to arguing that only the servant or one of his family members can

⁴⁷ This is similar to the way in which everything that God does is just, since God is justice. God’s will and activity do not conform to nor are judged by any external standards of justice, rightness, etc.

⁴⁸ Jasper Hopkins, *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm* (Minneapolis,: University of Minnesota Press, 1972)., see chapter VI – “Christology and Soteriology.”

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

make amends for dishonoring the master. Hopkins views this as a uniquely feudal perspective that does not stand the test of logic: “Anselm’s attempt to make the doctrines of incarnation and atonement plausible does not escape the marks of feudal imagery. His theory may, it is true, be restated independently of this imagery: but this reformulation could not then even preserve the semblance of escaping the non sequitor [sic] in the fundamental argument of the *Cur Deus Homo*.”⁵¹ For Hopkins, the master-servant analogy is inseparable from Anselm’s argument. In order to make his case, he analyzes Anselm’s language concerning who “ought” and “can” pay the *debt* in order to provide for the salvation of human beings.

The thrust of Hopkins’ critique of Anselm’s use of “ought” and “can” is contained in the following passage:

It becomes clear that when Anselm argues “Only man ought to; only God can; therefore, necessarily a God-man,” he is equivocating on the meaning of “ought.” For the sense in which man *ought* is the unconditional sense in which he *owes*. (The Latin verb *debere*, used repeatedly by Anselm, contains the notion of owing.) But the sense in which the God-man *ought* is the conditional sense in which He ought since (if) He *wills to*. In *Cur Deus Homo* II, 18 Anselm acknowledges these two different senses. But he fails to realize that their appearance invalidates his argument.⁵²

As seen in the previous discussion of his usage of “ought,” Anselm clearly and intentionally uses “ought” in different ways to refer to God and to human beings. Hopkins seems to prefer that Anselm use the term univocally and criticizes the different applications for God and human beings. In doing so, he seems to have reversed the priority for usages of “ought” that Anselm had. Hopkins refers to the “ought” that reflects the divine will as “the conditional sense.” However, I would argue that Anselm

⁵¹ Ibid., 197-198.

⁵² Ibid., 195-196.

believed this to be the unconditional sense, since it is the purest form of the idea, without the involvement of any external influence. The will of God is a pure “ought” not only for God but also for every creature since whatever God wills “ought” to be done, whether by God or by creatures. What Hopkins calls “the unconditional sense” in which a human being owes something, is actually a variation on the basic form of “ought.” Owing something implies external parties and events. Although it may conform with the divine will, this is not necessarily the case. The concepts of “owing” and “obligation” build on the basic idea of “ought” and, as such, the human “ought” to which Hopkins refers should be considered to be the conditional sense. The root of the difference seems to be Hopkins’ insertion of the parenthetical “(if)” with regard to the will of God. While it may seem to Hopkins that the “willing” and “ought” of God’s activity are contingent or conditional, they are not, as has been discussed in earlier sections of this work. The divine will is still perfectly free even if it does not have the option to do anything other than the best.

In addition to “ought,” Hopkins targets Anselm’s use of “can” and claims that there is equivocation on both terms in the *CDH*. He adduces Anselm’s understanding of “can” from his use of “ought:”

When Anselm says ‘Only man ought to,’ he is also tacitly saying ‘Only man can’; and this sense of ‘can’ is different from the sense of ‘can’ in the statement ‘Only God can.’ Only God can – in the sense that only God as the power to make satisfaction; only man can – in the sense that only man can consistently be thought to make satisfaction. That is, only God *can effectively*; only man *can acceptably*.⁵³

In this instance, it seems that Hopkins is making too fine a division of Anselm’s language. Anselm’s “ought” for humanity carries with it the senses of obligation and

⁵³ Ibid., 196.

debt. There is both the original obligation to uphold righteousness for the honor of God and the debt incurred by the sinful failure to do so. The “ought” is specific to human beings descended from Adam and no other being “can” fulfill the obligation because it is particular to human beings with a certain relationship to God. The obligation relationship is between God and human beings and thus no other being, even another creature created by God, can make repayment under the same set of circumstances that a human being descended from Adam can. This is solely due to the “ought” incumbent upon human beings descended from Adam and is built into that understanding of “ought.” However, Hopkins has an interest in separating “ought” and “can” for rhetorical purposes, as he makes clear in the next paragraph in which he lays out the details of what he views to be Anselm’s equivocation.

Hopkins lays out two meanings each for “ought” and “can:” “Only Adam and his natural descendants ought₁ in that only they owe; but Jesus ought₂ in that He wills to. Only God can₁ in that He has the power to; but only man can₂ in that no other alternative is theologically admissible.”⁵⁴ The “theological admissibility” being referred to here is the necessity for someone descended from Adam to pay the *debt* of sin and this is the point that bothers Hopkins so much about Anselm’s argument:

Anselm’s confusion occurs when he infers, invalidly, that because only man ought₁ and only God can₁, only a God-man ought₂ and can₁. And his confusion continues when he implies that only Adamic man can₂ because only Adamic man ought₁ – that is, that non-Adamic man can₂ not because he ought₁ not. But if Jesus both ought₁ not and can₂, why should the case be different for a non-Adamic man?⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ibid., 197.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 197.

Hopkins has thus doubled the “ought” and “can” from the idea that “only humans ought and only God is able.” As mentioned earlier, I would prefer to conflate can_2 into the meaning of ought_2 . Further, though, I would prefer to conflate ought_2 into can_1 . For Anselm, the will and power of God are inseparable. If God wills x then God has the power to do x and vice-versa. Ultimately, if Anselm were following Hopkins’ rubric, he would articulate his argument as “only human beings descended from Adam ought_1 and only God can_1 , thus the God-man.” For Hopkins, though, this does not convincingly rule out the possibility of a God-man who is a combination of God and a non-Adamic human being.⁵⁶ The crux of his argument is that “only man can_2 ” is invalid. He argues that if the God-man does not have the same “ought” as Adamic human beings (by virtue of His sinlessness), there is no reason that the God-man could not also have a different “ can_2 ” and could be a combination of God and a non-Adamic human being.

Anselm would have at least two responses to Hopkins’ challenge. The first would be that Hopkins has not fully grasped the various meanings of “ought” in the *CDH*. The God-man can and must owe the same *debt* of upholding righteousness by conforming to the will of God as an Adamic human being. Where the God-man differs from the rest of Adamic humanity is that he does not have the same obligations with regard to the *debt* of sin owed to God. A non-Adamic human being would not have any “ought” that would connect him to the relationship between Adamic human beings and God. Although Anselm does not make this argument specifically, Katherin Rogers has articulated it on Anselm’s behalf: “Anselm took the biological connectedness of all human beings

⁵⁶ By “non-Adamic human being” Hopkins means some sort of human being created by God outside of the descendents of Adam. Hopkins seems to envision some parallel, sinless humanity that, while identical in nature to human beings descended from Adam, is completely unrelated (biologically) to so-called “Adamic human beings.”

seriously, and saw the human family as a genuine biological entity with special properties of its own. Mankind is then a real collective object rather like a country or a corporation.”⁵⁷ Anselm clearly shows concern for Adamic humanity as a group, since he argues that God could not and would not simply allow the divine purpose for the creation of Adamic humanity to go to waste by destroying them.⁵⁸ By conceiving of humanity as a “real collective object,” Rogers contends that there is intrinsic value to the whole of humanity as a group. The group can both act and be acted upon collectively in the same way as any singular object. Rogers concludes by arguing that it is possible to allow for one member of a group to not owe the same debt as the rest and not in the process open the door for any non-member to pay the debt: “it is not implausible to think that, just as a country or a corporation may owe a debt, so may the race of Adam. And yet each individual member may not personally owe the debt. In the case of the human family everyone but Christ does, because He is the only one who is not conceived through a willingly chosen procreative act on the part of a human father.”⁵⁹ Thus, Hopkins seems to over-reach in his dismissal of an Adamic God-man in favor of a non-Adamic God-man.⁶⁰

Anselm’s second reply to Hopkins would be the answer he explicitly provides in the *CDH*: payment of the debt by a non-Adamic human being would make Adamic human beings the servants of some other being(s) than God and this is not theologically

⁵⁷ Katherin A. Rogers, "A Defense of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* Argument," in *Philosophical Theology: Reason and Theological Doctrine*, ed. Michael Baur, *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (Bronx, NY: American Catholic Philosophical Association, 2000), 196.

⁵⁸ See book I, chapter 4. Rogers cites a similar passage in *De Conceptu Virginali* 17.

⁵⁹ Rogers, "A Defense of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* Argument," 197.

⁶⁰ Hopkins’ move here also seems to ignore Anselm’s comments (echoed by Bonaventure, as discussed earlier in Ch. 1) that the generation of the God-man from a woman in the absence of a man is fitting in order to fill out the possible means of human generation (see *CDH* II.8).

appropriate. Adamic human beings would owe their life to an outsider as their savior and would be in *debt* to someone other than God. Anselm addresses this in book I, chapter 5 in the context of any other being providing for the salvation of humanity (whether divine in any way or not):

*Quaecumque alia persona hominem a morte aeterna redimeret, eius servus idem homo recte iudicaretur? Quod si esset, nullatenus restauratus esset in illam dignitatem, quam habiturus erat, si non pecasset: cum ipse, qui non nisi dei servus et aequalis angelis bonis per omnia futurus erat, servus esset eius, qui deus non esset et cuius angeli servi non essent.*⁶¹

This would effectively yield a parallel situation to the one described in the devil-ransom theory of atonement in which humanity is held in bondage by the devil. Anselm has clearly shown that he does not find that to be a logical or plausible state of affairs. He has no room for any third parties in the relationship between God and humanity, regardless of origin. This speaks not only to the relationship between God and humanity, but also to the place of humanity within the order of created beings. Anselm concludes his point made above by arguing that humanity was created with the express purpose of being in *debt* to no one except God (“*servus esset eius, qui deus non est*”). Humanity would not exist properly (and would not be restored to the proper status) if God combined with some other being to save humanity.

Hopkins came to his conclusion because he assumed that Anselm was making his point from a wholly feudal perspective. Just prior to making his final point that the *CDH* is irretrievably feudal, Hopkins sketches what he believes to be the way that Anselm viewed the relationship between God and humanity:

⁶¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 5 (II, 52).

It becomes increasingly clear that Anselm's thought is influenced by the following analogy: a servant who has dishonored his good master brings disgrace upon himself and his whole family. That disgrace can be removed only through the future merits either of the servant himself or of some member of his family. An outsider may, to some extent, redress the grievance on behalf of the family; but his actions, by themselves, can never remove the family disgrace.⁶²

Hopkins assumes that this apparently self-evidently feudal analogy demonstrates that Anselm was so blinded by his feudal context that he was unable to recognize the validity of any alternative solution. However, Hopkins goes to great lengths to develop his own feudal analogy in spite of the fact that Anselm included a similar analogy in book II, chapter 16 to make the point that the salvation provided by the God-man would be efficacious not only for those who were witnesses to the actions of the God-man, but also for those who were separated by time and location. It is useful to compare the point that Hopkins made (putatively on behalf of, or in the name of, Anselm) with Anselm's own words:

*Sit enim rex aliquis, cui totus populus suae cuiusdam civitatis sic peccavit, excepto uno solo, qui tamen de illorum est genere, ut nullus eorum facere possit unde mortis damnationem evadat. Ille autem qui solus est innocens, tantam apud regem habet gratiam ut possit, et tantam dilectionem erga reos ut velit omnes qui suo credent consilio reconciliare quodam servitio valde ipsi regi placituro, quod facturus est die secundum voluntatem regis statuto. Et quoniam non omnes possunt qui reconciliandi sunt ad diem illam convenire, concedit rex propter magnitudinem illius servitii, ut quicumque vel ante vel post diem illam confessi fuerint se velle per illud opus quod ea die fiet, veniam impetrare et ad pactum ibi constitutum accedere, ab omni culpa sint absoluti praeterita;*⁶³

Here, Anselm seems to play into the hands of critics like Hopkins by crafting an analogy (“*similitudinem*”) with a seemingly hierarchical and feudal context. There is a king and a people in a particular city who are subservient to him. The sin of the entire populace is

⁶² Hopkins, *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm*, 197.

⁶³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 16 (II, 118).

placed in the hands of the one member of the city who remains innocent and is able to perform a service for the honor of the king in order to reconcile the people of the city. The point of Anselm's story was that it is logical to allow for the effect of one meritorious act to be applied to many people, even those who are not present at the time of the act (*"tanta fuit vis in eius morte, ut etiam in absentes vel loco vel tempore eius protendatur effectus."*⁶⁴). The feudal trappings of the story are secondary. Anselm de-emphasizes the feudal nature of the analogy by turning the focus from the details of the story to the purpose of the creation of human beings. The reason why the effect of the work of the God-man was efficacious for so many people had nothing to do with any element of feudalism but had everything to do with what Anselm viewed to be the purpose of creation: *"Quod autem non solis praesentibus prodesse debeat hinc facile cognoscitur, quia non tot praesentes eius morti esse potuerunt, quot ad supernae civitatis constructionem necessarii sunt, etiam si omnes qui eiusdem mortis tempore ubicumque errant, ad illam redemptionem admitterentur."*⁶⁵ Anselm returns to the idea that humanity was created to replace the complement of beings in heaven after the fall of the rebellious angels. There is an "ought" here that supersedes the supposed machinations of feudal society: Anselm's thought process is governed by the divine purpose for humanity and not the details of any analogy that may be used to explain it. Humanity "ought" to fulfill the purpose for which is created and this is the overriding theme for Anselm: *"Videretur enim inconveniens quod deus vel uno momento permiserit humanum genus et ea quae fecit propter usum eorum, de quibus superna civitas perficienda est, quasi frustra extitisse. Nam aliquatenus in vanum esse viderentur, quamdiu non ad hoc propter*

⁶⁴ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 16 (II, 118).

⁶⁵ Ibid., CDH lib. II, cap. 16 (II, 118-119).

quod maxime facta essent, viderentur subsistere.”⁶⁶ This passage hints at the broader perspective that Anselm takes to the language of his argument throughout the *CDH*.

Although the analogy that he employs here may have some appearance of feudalism, the points that Anselm uses it to convey are entirely theological; in this case, the concern is for preserving the original created purpose for humanity.

Athanasius’ Usage of Debt

The relationship between fulfilling the purpose for the creation of humanity and the necessity of the Incarnation and Atonement has been explored already in the discussion surrounding Anselm’s use of the term “honor” and the comparison to Athanasius’ use of “image.” The connection is visible again in the discussion of *debt* and “ought,” in that both Anselm and Athanasius argue that a God-man was necessary for the fulfillment of the purpose for the creation of human beings. Whereas Anselm utilized a broad understanding of *debitum* and *debeo* to encompass ideas of *debt*, owing, obligation and ought, Athanasius used the idea of *debt* (τὸ ὀφειλόμενον) primarily to refer to the impact of sin on humanity. Athanasius viewed corruption and death as the obstacle to the fulfillment of the purpose of human creation and, correspondingly, viewed the death of the God-man as the way to remove the obstacle: “Therefore as an offering and sacrifice free of all spot, he offered to death the body which he had taken to himself, and immediately abolished death from all who were like him by the offering of a like. For since the Word is above all, consequently by offering his temple and the instrument of his body as a substitute for all men, he fulfilled the debt by his death.”⁶⁷ The language of

⁶⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 16 (II, 119).

⁶⁷ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Robert W. Thomson, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 155 (*DI* 9).

debt found here is repeated later in the work by way of summary, showing Athanasius' commitment to the use of the concept: "But since the debt owed by all men had still to be paid, for all, as I said above, had to die..."⁶⁸ and "For there was need of death, and death on behalf of all had to take place in order that what was owed by all men might be paid."⁶⁹ At the same time, Athanasius reinforces the emphasis placed on the usage of *debt* since he openly admits that he is repeating his ideas in order to draw attention to their importance: "Do not be surprised if we frequently repeat the same arguments, for since we are talking of the goodness of God, therefore we express the same idea in many ways lest we seem to omit anything and incur the charge of saying too little."⁷⁰ Athanasius was committed to using the idea of a *debt* to characterize what it was that humanity owed and what it was that the God-man had to do in order to put humanity in a position to fulfill the purpose of its' creation. The fact that Athanasius and Anselm share this theological position has been recognized, but has met with varying interpretations.

Foley on Debt as a Connection Between Anselm and Athanasius

Foley acknowledges the point of convergence between Athanasius and Anselm but argues that the commonality begins and ends with the term *debt* and that the two theologians use the word in different ways. Foley spent a great deal of time examining the atonement theories of the patristic period and dedicates a large amount of space to discussing Athanasius (second only to Augustine). He views Athanasius as taking an entirely different approach from Anselm and argues that those who draw theological parallels between the two do so on the basis of "single words and expressions...taken out

⁶⁸ Ibid., 183 (*DI* 20).

⁶⁹ Ibid., 185 (*DI* 20).

⁷⁰ Ibid., 183 (*DI* 20).

of their connection.”⁷¹ He cites the passages from *DI* quoted above and points out that “the debt spoken of by Athanasius is an obligation resting upon humanity as a whole, on account of sin, and hence every man must pay it, and Christ pays it with us, in order that corruption may not issue in permanent death. Nothing more than this can be meant by Athanasius...”⁷² This is an accurate observation based on Athanasius’ usage of the concept in *DI* and reinforced by references in his other works.⁷³ For Foley, Athanasius represents the general position of human salvation through the Incarnation accomplished via the divinization of humanity in the life and death of Christ.

While this may be an accurate summary of Athanasius’ work, it is incomplete and fails to recognize the nuances of Athanasius’ thought in the *DI*. Athanasius uses two parables in *DI* that illustrate this point. The first, in chapter 9, compares the Incarnation to a king taking up residence in a city and honor coming to that city simply by virtue of the king’s presence.⁷⁴ This imagery that is so clearly analogous to the idea of divinization is followed up by another parable that goes in a different direction. This second parable, in chapter 10, relates a story of a king whose house or city has been attacked through the negligence of the inhabitants and the king himself comes to the scene to repossess what has been taken from him.⁷⁵ Athanasius explains that the king does this because he is motivated to restore the royal relationship:

[The king] avenges and rescues it having regard not for the negligence of its inhabitants but for his own honour. So all the more, when the race of men which had been created by himself had descended to corruption, God

⁷¹ George Cadwalader Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 53.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 57.

⁷³ Foley cites the *Orationes Contra Arianos* II.66, in which a similar usage of *debt* is found.

⁷⁴ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione.*, 155 (*DI* 9).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 155-157 (*DI* 10).

the Word of the all-good Father did not neglect them, but effaced the death which had fallen upon them by the offering of his own body, and corrected their negligence by his teaching, and reformed all men's estate by his own power.⁷⁶

The emphasis here is less on the salvation of humanity and more on what was fitting and proper (τὸ ἑαυτοῦ πρέπον – translated above as “for his own honour”) for the nature of God. Athanasius goes on to explain that this was “the primary cause” of the Incarnation. I take Athanasius' intent here to be to explain that the relationship between God and humanity had to be restored to the state of original creation. There was a motivation (an “ought,” if you will) that used the divinization of humanity as a tool to accomplish the over-arching goal, which was the restoration of humanity to its created state so that the purpose of human creation would not be frustrated.

It seems clear, though, that Foley does not take all of this into consideration when making his comparison between Athanasius and Anselm on the usage of *debt*. In his conclusion on the matter, he attempts to place the two on opposing sides:

The coincidence [of Athanasius] with Anselm is verbal, not substantial. With Anselm, the debt was owed to God's justice; it was wholly cancelled by the obedience of Christ, the equivalence or superabundance of whose merit arose from the voluntariness of His death. With Athanasius, the debt was the just claim of God's law; it was the necessity of death, but not the necessity of abiding in death for ever; it was paid so far as to sustain God's law, but not so as to relieve man of its rigorous exaction just as before Christ's death. But His death, completing His ἔνωσις with humanity enabled Him to triumph over death as a continuing power, by permitting men to share His immortality; and His ability to do this arose from His being the Incarnate Word of God.

Foley, while including accurate portrayals of the positions of Athanasius and Anselm, fails to evaluate the bigger picture of the usage of *debt* by the two theologians. For both, paying the debt meant reconstituting the relationship between God and humanity. It was

⁷⁶ Ibid., 157 (DI 10).

a driving force for the Incarnation and both make it clear that, not only was a God-man necessary, but there is a motivation (an “ought”) for both parties. Athanasius explained that it would have been improper for God to allow for the destruction of His creation, even though it was a (potential) result of divine law. Anselm insisted that the complement of heavenly beings must be filled and God “ought” to provide for the salvation of the human beings whom He created to take the place of the fallen angels. Both use the language of *debt* to describe this in detailed fashion and the similarities are found in deep theological contexts and are not superficial, as Foley suggests.

Hart on Debt and Gift

In recent years, more scholars have noticed the similar uses of *debt* by both Athanasius and Anselm and have commented on it in more constructive ways than Foley. David Bentley Hart has taken an ecumenical approach to the issue, in an attempt to show that the doctors of Eastern and Western Christian theology have more common ground on the Incarnation and Atonement than has been traditionally granted. Hart points out that both Eastern and Western scholars have criticized the *CDH* and, in his view, much of this has come unfairly: “misreadings of Anselm are legion, but many of the misinterpretations to which his work has been subjected over the years are at least instructively false.”⁷⁷ Referring to Anselm as a “victim of his own clarity,”⁷⁸ Hart questions whether “the actual text of *Cur Deus Homo* has not been lost to view, behind the welter of adverse judgments brought to bear upon it.”⁷⁹ However, after examining some of the critiques of the *CDH* (both western and eastern), Hart finds a worthy comparator in Athanasius’ *DI*.

⁷⁷ David Bentley Hart, “A Gift Exceeding Every Debt: An Eastern Orthodox Appreciation of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo*,” *Pro Ecclesia* VII, no. 3 (1998), 335.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 335.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

He finds such similarity of purpose, method and language between the two that he makes the following (almost gushing) analysis:

Already present in Athanasius's account is the very story whose inner shape Anselm will, in a moment of intense critical reflection, attempt to grasp as necessity. Already, in Athanasius's theology, one finds the language of punishment used, but subordinate to the narrative of complete and unmerited forgiveness, and the language of law employed to describe the depths of an infinite mercy. As it is with Athanasius, so it is with Anselm.⁸⁰

Hart then takes on the terminology of *debt* as an example of misguided criticism that has been leveled at Anselm. Rather than wielding all of the unpleasant connotations associated with *debt* in the ugliness of its worst human applications, Hart views Anselm as subverting the human or negative idea of *debt* in the CDH and showing that the drama of the God-man is the offering of a gift of love in a schema of recapitulation. For him, Anselm "has recognized Christ's act as an infinite motion towards the Father, belonging to the mystery of the Trinity, simply surpassing all the arrangements of debt and violence by which a sinful humanity seeks to calculate its 'justice.'"⁸¹

Although Anselm may use the language of *debt*, justice, etc., Hart sees Anselm as using these terms only to highlight the inadequacy of human parallels to divine activity. The integration of God into humanity via the God-man allows these flawed concepts of *debt*, honor, justice and satisfaction to be renewed, just as the God-man renews humanity. For Hart, "in the end, Anselm merely restates the oldest patristic model of atonement of all: that of recapitulation."⁸² The God-man not only brings humanity back into a right relationship with God, but He goes above and beyond what is necessary, to the point that

⁸⁰ Ibid., 347.

⁸¹ Ibid., 347-348.

⁸² Ibid., 348.

His offering is viewed as a gift, not merely the fulfillment of a *debt*. Hart argues that Anselm's God-man "recapitulates humanity by passing through all the violence of sin and death, rendering to God the obedience that is his due, and so transforms the event of his death into an occasion of infinite blessings for those to whom death is condign."⁸³ Just as death is transformed (even appropriated) by the God-man, Hart argues that Anselm's vision is one in which the sinful institutions and social structures that so many critics have accused Anselm of reinforcing are instead co-opted in the *CDH*: "as Christ's sacrifice belongs not to an economy of credit and exchange, but to the Trinitarian motion of love, it is given entirely as gift, and must be seen as such: a gift given when it should not have needed to be given again, by God and at the price that *we*, in our sin, imposed upon *him*."⁸⁴ So, for Hart, the ideas of *debt*, owing, obligation and ought are present in the *CDH* not as part of an underlying feudal structure to the argument, but to exemplify the idea that the work of the God-man exceeds these human concepts and demonstrates a divine love for humanity that resists limitation in any way. Hart argues that Anselm accomplishes this through the introduction of the infinite (which is beyond human comprehension) into a supposedly economic system: "simply by continuing to be the God he is, and through the sheer 'redundancy' of the good that flows from the infinite gesture of his love – which is a generosity in excess of all calculable economy – God undoes the sacrificial logic of our bondage; his gift remains a gift to the end, despite all our efforts to convert it into debt."⁸⁵ Rather than constraining the saving grace of God in a feudal complex, Hart views Anselm as having elevated human efforts to describe the

⁸³ Ibid., 348.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 348.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 348-349.

Incarnation and Atonement with human (even feudal) language by incorporating divine elements (in this case, the infinity of God). He acknowledges, though, that this is a matter of perspective: “Whether one chooses, of course, to follow Nietzsche in the *Genealogy of Morals* and see the redundancy of Christ’s merit, inasmuch as it avails for salvation, as an infinite multiplication of debt depends upon one’s prejudices.”⁸⁶ Hart chooses, instead, to interpret Anselm’s language as the triumph of God over sin, gift over debt: “The gift, which is the very language of love, precedes, exceeds, and annuls every debt. Inasmuch as this is the story that Anselm repeats, elaborates, probes, and proclaims, he certainly has his place among the fathers.”⁸⁷

McIntyre on Debt

The central message that Hart conveys is that Anselm is misunderstood when critics focus on his use of *debt* as an indication of bringing a feudal perspective to the Incarnation and Atonement. This is the same point that John McIntyre makes in his book *St. Anselm and His Critics*,⁸⁸ though he does not make the same comparison with the work of Athanasius. Instead, McIntyre argues that all of Anselm’s use of *debt* and its variants (as discussed above) can be conflated into one understanding of “oughtness:”

It must also be pointed out that for St. Anselm the notions of ‘ought’ and ‘owing a debt’ are the same, so that the propositions: ‘the rational nature *ought* to subject its will to the Will of God’, and ‘the rational nature *owes* God *the debt* of subjecting its will to the Will of God’, are logically equivalent. This equivalence is of supreme importance in the understanding of St. Anselm’s soteriology, but it is most frequently ignored. For, while etymologically the two notions of ‘ought’ and ‘owing a debt’ are identical, in modern thought they have become quite separate;

⁸⁶ Ibid., 349.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 349.

⁸⁸ John McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo* (Edinburgh,: Oliver and Boyd, 1954).

very few modern analyses of the concept ‘oughtness’ ever take account of the debt implication contained in it.⁸⁹

McIntyre argues that not only is Anselm conveying the same point when he uses the forms of *debeo* that are translated as *debt*, owing, obligation and ought, the variations and shades of meaning conveyed by the different English words do not exist for Anselm. He views all of the variants as logically interchangeable, though he seems to prefer “ought” and “oughtness” for the fewer possible connotations that come with these terms.

McIntyre develops this argument in support of his ultimate conclusion concerning Anselm’s use of *debt*: “Therefore, when St. Anselm develops the notion of debt in the chapters succeeding I.11, in his investigation of human sin and of salvation, he must not be interpreted in economic rather than in more or less religious terms. In St. Anselm moral or religious oughtness is ever reducible to economic indebtedness...”⁹⁰

Whereas Hart argues that Anselm intentionally transforms human notions of *debt* by disrupting them with the presence of the infinite divinity and transforming them into a system of divine gifting, McIntyre chooses a more direct route by simply preferring the moral and religious to the economic and arguing that the variations of terminology reflect different, equivalent uses of one concept. Although McIntyre’s approaching is tempting for its simplicity and ease of application, the richness and variety of Anselm’s use of *debeo* is too wide-ranging and important to conflate into a single meaning. Even though the English language reflects this variety by different words, there is no reason that the intentions of Anselm cannot be located in a common source in spite of the varying usage. It is clear that Anselm does not operate with an exclusively economic understanding of

⁸⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 67.

debt across his varying usage of *debeo*, but it is not likely that every instance can be translated with a version of “ought” or that his use of *debt* always carries the force of the overarching divine gift. Rather, the right approach seems to be one that allows for variety of usage but also incorporates a shift of mindset that removes the feudal/economic context from the possible range of meaning.

Properly Understanding Anselm’s Use of *Debt*

I argue that a proper understanding of Anselm’s use of *debt* and its variants must take into consideration the similar usage by Athanasius, the scriptural references and sources that Anselm himself mentions, and the varieties of meaning that Anselm clearly employs. The idea of expressing the obligation of humanity in terms of a *debt* obviously resonated with Athanasius in his systematic examination of the Incarnation and Atonement. As seen earlier, though, Athanasius’ particular usage was in the context of the restoration of creation to its original state. Sin had placed humanity in violation of divine law and the conflict between the death sentence that was impending for humanity and the goal of maintaining creation in its perfect state left humanity in a position of *debt*. Athanasius used this term to express the idea that the sin of humanity ought to be corrected. In this sense, the point that Athanasius makes with his use of *debt* can be expressed in the different ways that McIntyre points out in his work with respect to Anselm’s usage. Athanasius’ usage, while significant, was not as frequent or varied as Anselm’s. Taken together, the points made by Athanasius and McIntyre can be summarized in this: the use of *debt* reflects the idea that there is an “ought,” an obligation for the sinful state of humanity to be corrected in order that the purpose of human creation can be fulfilled.

The argument that humanity “ought” to be free from sin and the consequences thereof is reflected not only in the work of Patristic sources such as Athanasius, but also in scriptural sources.⁹¹ The most important scriptural source for Anselm and his use of *debt* is the passage from the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew that is cited explicitly in book I, chapter 19.⁹² In the Lord’s Prayer, the comparison is made between the way that God forgives human *debts* (presumably sins) and the way that humans forgive *debts* of each other (presumably more than simply financial *debts* and perhaps even more than sinful actions committed against one another). As mentioned above, this passage provides scriptural warrant for using the term *debt* to describe the relationship between God and humanity. Anselm acknowledges this and argues that even though the term *debt* is used to describe the relationship between humans and other humans and also between God and humans, the term cannot be used bi-directionally in the case of the latter. That is, God can never be considered to be in *debt* to a human being (or humanity) in the same way that any human being can be in debt to another human being. Now that Anselm has established that there are clear differences of usage, it raises the question whether there are also other important differences of meaning accompanying the differences of usage.

⁹¹ I have tried to show that there is a strong similarity between the understandings of *debt* by Athanasius and Anselm, but by no means can I or do I argue that Anselm was influenced on this matter by Athanasius. Anselmian scholars such as Giles Gasper have searched the record of the library at Bec and other historical records for evidence that Anselm may have read Athanasius, but there is none to be found. From a textual perspective, Schmitt did not cite Athanasius at all in the notes of critical edition of the *CDH*. In fact, Schmitt is nearly silent in his notes to the sections of the *CDH* in which the idea of *debt* occurs and makes no connection to any patristic writer. I can only point to the strong similarities of intent and usage in arguing for a connection between Athanasius and Anselm. I feel comfortable in doing this since it is clear from the works of other Anselm scholars (Gasper, McMahon, etc.) that I am not alone in my line of thought.

⁹² *et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimisimus debitoribus nostris* – Matthew 6:12. As mentioned earlier, Schmitt noted the influence of this passage twice in his notes to the *CDH*. Also, he does not connect any other “debt”-related sections of the *CDH* to scriptural passages.

As discussed earlier, Anselm uses *debeo* in the sense of “obligation” uniquely with regard to human beings and does not use it to speak of any “ought” or *debt* on the part of God. This seems to be due to the fact that Anselm uses it to describe situations in which the circumstances are contingent – usually a result of a choice of human free will and often in opposition to the will or law of God. Anselm appears to protect the sovereignty of God at all times – although humans may find themselves in *debt* or in situations of obligation, the same cannot be said of God. The only “ought” for God is that God’s will ought to be carried out.⁹³ For Anselm, this is almost redundant, since whatever God wills simply “is.” When human sin disrupts the purpose of creation and the creature fails to render honor to the Creator, there may be an apparent temporal failure of God’s will to be implemented, but God’s will always reigns and the apparent lapse is corrected. Regardless of whether one accepts Anselm’s understanding of eternity (which allows him to consistently view the sovereignty of God as prevalent), it is clear that Anselm’s intention is to use *debt* and its variants to express the degree to which creation is in compliance with God’s will at any given time. The absolute sovereignty of the divine will along with the certainty that any lapse in conformity is only apparent combine to defy any attempt to quantify any amount(s) of human *debt* or obligation to God. Thus, the assertion by critics of the *CDH* that Anselm characterizes the sin of humanity in the same terms as a financial *debt* owed by a serf to a master fails to conform to Anselm’s self-understanding of his of *debt* and its variants. Instead of recklessly applying the elements of feudal obligations to the infinite and ultimately loving actions of

⁹³ This is the only way in which God may be said to be “in debt” – to Himself. However, it seems to be more clear to simply say that God’s will must be carried out. Perhaps the theology of the Trinity may have a more complex rubric of intra-divine obligation, but that is not germane to this discussion.

God in the Incarnation and Atonement, Anselm has wielded the infinite and perfect activity of God to show that the relationships in question defy quantification. Anselm's point is just that the relationship between humans and God cannot be expressed in human terms and *debt* is the example, not the exception. Anselm applies this principle consistently and rigorously throughout the *CDH* in the course of a thoroughgoing treatment of the Incarnation and Atonement that makes use of a sophisticated understanding of *debt*, owing, obligation and ought. In the end, it is clear that Anselm makes exactly the opposite move that so many of critics have accused him of making – Anselm's use of *debt* demonstrates how *inconsistent* the *CDH* is with the human relationships present in feudal society rather than playing out the Incarnation and Atonement as an economic transaction in a feudal drama.

Chapter 5

Satisfaction

If asked to provide a one-word summary of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*, any reader, from the casual student to the lifelong expert, would most likely reply: "satisfaction." Textbooks, articles and entire works devoted to the *CDH* (whether taking a neutral, negative or positive approach to the work itself) most often portray the idea of *satisfaction* as Anselm's clear emphasis and most significant contribution to theological discourse via this work. The primary reason for this is that the *CDH* is the first work in the history of Christian theology to portray the salvific work of the Incarnation and Atonement as *satisfaction* made by humanity in order to correct and heal the consequences of human sin. However, in the intervening centuries since the *CDH* entered the realm of theological discourse, the term *satisfaction* has taken on a life of its own, expanding in meaning and application far beyond Anselm's use in the *CDH*.¹ As a result, the important role that *satisfaction* plays in the *CDH* has served as a lightning-rod of criticism. Critics have inappropriately applied later understandings of *satisfaction* to the *CDH* and point out supposed shortcomings due to the fact that Anselm did not somehow anticipate the negative connotations of "satisfaction." This has led even friendly interpreters of Anselm and the *CDH* to downplay *satisfaction* in favor of other points (such as justice) in the *CDH*. For example, Alister E. McGrath, who would likely

¹ See Aulén's *Christus Victor* for an overview of the Reformation appropriation of *satisfaction* and his interpretation of Luther's use thereof.

call himself a friendly interpreter of Anselm, commented that “[t]he weak point in Anselm’s Soteriology is generally considered to be his discussion of satisfaction.”² This seems to reflect not so much an inadequate treatment of the subject by Anselm, but rather the expectations of modern readers that any appropriation of a term with such negative connotations in theological discourse should be accompanied by a justification for doing so. However, I argue that it is unreasonable to expect Anselm to anticipate later developments in usage and understanding of *satisfaction* and he should be judged on his own terms and by his own meanings and usage. The goal of this chapter is to explore carefully the way that Anselm employed the term *satisfaction* in the *CDH* and to clarify the meaning he conveyed with its usage. This will be distinguished from the various inaccurate meanings that have been attributed to him, most of which stem from later developments in the meaning of the term.

Anselm and Historical Usage of *Satisfaction*

Explorations of Anselm’s use of *satisfaction* typically begin with an analysis of the origins of the term itself. From a historical perspective, attention usually turns first to Tertullian, who appears to have been the first Christian writer to apply the terms “*satisfactio*” and “*satisfacere*” to the realm of soteriology. Foley, in his book *Anselm’s Theory of the Atonement*, points out that the term “is purely a Latin conception, having no equivalent in Greek; and was borrowed from the legal language of Rome.”³ The legal aspect of the linguistic origin and Tertullian’s own background as a lawyer have caused some interpreters to focus perhaps too narrowly on the legal connotations of *satisfaction*.

² Alister E. McGrath, "Rectitude: The Moral Foundation of Anselm of Canterbury's Soteriology," *Downside Review* 99 (1981), 211.

³ George Cadwalader Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), 78.

Foley seems to fall into this category as he argues that Tertullian's usage led directly into medieval (specifically Anselm's) usage of satisfaction: "[Tertullian] was led to contemplate all moral relations from the legal standpoint, and it would have been natural for him to describe the relation of Christ to our salvation in juridical terms. He introduced the forensic conceptions which afterwards governed Western theology, and thus prepared the way for the mediæval theory of Atonement."⁴ Although Foley acknowledges that Tertullian and Anselm (along with other Western theologians) used *satisfaction* in different ways, he blames Tertullian for what he considers the negative impact of the term: "his use of satisfaction is a mischievous superstition, which had most disastrous results. The unethical and legal categories which he introduced afterwards dominated Western thought."⁵ Foley's focus on the historical origins of the use of *satisfaction* seems to have influenced his characterization of Anselm's use. He argued that the incorporation of the term (in supposedly the first such application of it since Tertullian) fit the Roman, legal approach that Anselm took in the *CDH*: "God is not thought of as a Father, but as a Judge or a Teutonic Over-lord."⁶ This harsh verdict is clearly tied to the historical approach that Foley takes to the origins of the use of *satisfaction*.

On the other hand, at least one scholar has argued that the historical approach is wrong-headed and is not the best way to understand Anselm's use of *satisfaction* in the *CDH*. McIntyre takes the position that Tertullian "was writing some eight hundred years before St. Anselm, and he cannot be regarded as exerting any great influence upon the

⁴ Ibid., 80-81.

⁵ Ibid., 81-82.

⁶ Ibid., 167-168.

latter.”⁷ Those who emphasize Tertullian’s usage also frequently point out similarities between Roman law and the church system of penitence that had been developed by Anselm’s day. However, the systems of penance, confession, etc. were so entrenched in the life of the Church that it is not possible to prove that Anselm based his idea of *satisfaction* on the putatively Roman origins of penance any more so than the many other aspects of church and monastic life. I would argue that so much attention has been paid to the supposed historical origins of *satisfaction* that those who criticize Anselm on this basis run the risk of falling victim to the fallacy of origins. There is simply no textual evidence from Anselm that his usage was in any way affected by the previous usage of the term. Rather, Anselm makes a versatile enough usage of *satisfaction* in the *CDH* that its’ proper meaning can be satisfactorily derived from Anselm’s work itself. McIntyre makes the following argument on the subject:

The meaning of the word as it appears in Anselmic soteriology is to be discovered, therefore, not by a historical analysis of previous uses of it, but by an examination of the place which it occupies within his scheme. For in a very real sense he builds up his own interpretation of it as the work proceeds, so that in the end we have an entirely new conception.⁸

This approach denies that Anselm used *satisfaction* simply in keeping with a tradition that had been inaugurated with Tertullian. Instead, McIntyre (and others) would argue that Anselm chose the word deliberately to fit his theological approach in the *CDH*. In the process, he appropriated a secular word⁹ and developed his own theological meaning in his use of it. McIntyre points out that this is not an uncommon occurrence in the

⁷ John McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo* (Edinburgh,: Oliver and Boyd, 1954)., 85.

⁸ Ibid., 87.

⁹ Although the word is secular in origin, it had already been incorporated into Christian theology and life before Anselm. See the *Rule of Benedict* (discussed later in this chapter) as an example with which Anselm would have had intimate knowledge.

history of theological language, particularly language involved in the description of the Incarnation and Atonement:

This kind of occurrence is frequently taking place in the history of theological language and usage. It happened when the words “ransom” and “propitiation” were applied to the Death of Christ by the earliest writers; in the new reference these words were “baptized” into a new meaning, which had certainly associations with the old in that the same words were still used, but in which these associations were radically transformed.¹⁰

Anselm clearly develops a unique meaning of *satisfaction* in the way that he appropriates the term for the *CDH*. The exploration of Anselm’s use of *satisfaction* in this chapter will attempt to show it is best understood through the Anselmian context itself. The history of the use of *satisfaction* by Tertullian and others was not relevant for Anselm and is not relevant to interpretations of Anselm’s work.¹¹ In an echo of the words of Foley (in his dismissal of the significance of the use of “debt” by both Athanasius and Anselm): “The coincidence...is verbal, not substantial.”¹² Anselm may have used the same term as Tertullian but his meaning was set by his own usage and not that of Tertullian. It is merely coincidence and not influence that connects the two theologians.

Anselm’s Usage of *Satisfaction*

Anselm provides a first glimpse into his understanding of *satisfaction* in his opening chapter when he quotes from I Peter 3:15 in his description of those who have been asking him to write the *CDH*: “*Dicunt enim eas sibi placere et arbitrantur satisfacere. Quod petunt, non ut per rationem ad fidem accedant, sed ut eorum quae*

¹⁰ McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo.*, 88.

¹¹ McIntyre articulates this point well: “For that reason I should say that most of the historical and critical analysis of the notion of *satisfaction*, as it appears in writers prior to St. Anselm, has been downright misleading, for it has created the impression that St. Anselm is bound in his employment of the notion by the interpretations placed upon it by his predecessors.” (Ibid., 88).

¹² Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement.*, 58.

credunt intellectu et contemplatione delectentur, et ut sint, quantum possunt, »parati semper ad satisfactionem omni poscenti« se »rationem de ea quae in« nobis »est spe«.”¹³ *Satisfaction* is, firstly, an answer or response. As such, it is not something that arises in a vacuum, but it responds to a need, a challenge, even a void. For Anselm, *satisfaction* is both the answer and the nature of the answer given to the question “*cur deus homo?*” Anselm portrays his own (putatively satisfactory) response to his eager (even pestering) audience as a parallel effort to the *satisfaction* provided by the God-man in the salvation of humanity. He filled an unmet need in a way similar to how God filled an unmet need in the Incarnation. So, the nature of the answer is one of completely responding to and fulfilling a need. To some (such as Anselm’s audience), the need might have been glaring. To others, though, the need might not have been so obvious. Anselm’s goal was to provide a satisfactory answer so that both those who recognized the need and those who did not were able to understand that the full and proper response had been given.

This brings the conversation around again to the idea of proportionality and appropriateness that has earlier arisen in the discussion of the honor of God. *Satisfaction*, as the fulfillment and response to a need, is inherently related to the type and size of the need in question. In the case of honor, Anselm argued that the offense to the honor of God was infinite, so the response (the *satisfaction*) must be of an infinite nature, as well. This relationship is not something that all interpreters of Anselm understand (or at least acknowledge) when approaching the *CDH*. One might argue that Hopkins failed to properly estimate the importance of proportionality for Anselm in his criticism of the use

¹³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938), *CDH* lib. I, cap. 1 (II, 47). Cf. I Peter 3:15.

of “ought” in the *CDH*. Anselm seems to value maximal proportionality (even parallelism) in describing the fittingness of the various aspects of the Incarnation and Atonement. The importance of the type and quality of the *satisfaction* would imply that since the need arose through the activity of humanity, the *satisfaction* should come through the activity of humanity. Anything else is less than a full or maximal response to the issue at hand and when the activity of God is involved, only the best or maximally appropriate is possible. Other critics have recognized this tactic that Anselm used and attempted to turn it against him on the issue of sin. To some, Anselm may be viewed as making too strong a connection between *satisfaction* and sin, to the extent that a weakness in the understanding of the latter necessarily translates to a weakness in the former. Foley provides a compelling example of this when he argues:

He has no understanding of a real salvation because he has no real understanding of sin. It is represented as something momentous in its effects upon both God and man, but its true ethical character is never discerned. It is not to him an “offence against inherent right and truth,” against the reasonable principles of righteousness or the loving heart of a Father; it is not disunity of spirit or perversion of will or depravation of nature. It is an affront to a great dignitary, a *laesa majestas*, an outward act of refusal to pay what is due.¹⁴

For Foley, the weakness of Anselm’s idea of *satisfaction* is inherently tied to the perceived weakness of Anselm’s concept of sin. In making this criticism, he appears to tacitly support the idea that human salvation should be related to human sin, in some way. Against Foley, Anselm would argue that his own understanding of sin is both real and comprehensible and so also is his portrayal of *satisfaction*. Foley seems unconvinced and Anselm’s position on the issue has been addressed in earlier chapters, so the point here is not to defend Anselm’s concept of sin, but to argue that it would be an artificial

¹⁴ Foley, *Anselm's Theory of the Atonement*., 155-156.

move for anyone to address Anselm's idea of *satisfaction* without incorporating his understanding of sin. Anselm clearly identifies the relationship between the two and the answer (*satisfaction*) is only truly comprehensible in the context of the question (sin).

Satisfaction and Fittingness

It is this relationship of need and response, question and answer, sin and *satisfaction* that provides the context for Anselm's use of the idea of "fittingness" in the *CDH*. While some interpreters of Anselm have linked his use of "fittingness" with that of "necessity" in order to contend that Anselm does not intend any sort of strict necessity for his argument, I would counter that Anselm uses the two in distinct contexts. Necessity has been discussed earlier in this work in the context of Anselm's use of justice, since Anselm used both "justice" and "necessity" to explain the consistency of God's actions with God's nature. The use of "fittingness" in the *CDH* does not affect that usage, but rather stands beside it in the discussion of the degree to which the *satisfaction* of the God-man so appropriately responds to the urgent need raised by the presence of human sin. Anselm addresses this briefly and in broad terms at the beginning of the *CDH*:

*Si enim diligenter considerarent quam convenienter hoc modo procurata sit humana restauratio, non deriderent nostram simplicitatem, sed dei nobiscum laudarent sapientem benignitatem. Oportebat namque ut, sicut per hominis inoboedientiam mors in humanum genus intraverat, ita per hominis oboedientiam vita restitueretur. Et quemadmodum peccatum quod fuit causa nostrae damnationis, initium habuit a femina, sic nostrae iustitiae et salutis auctor nasceretur de femina.*¹⁵

There is a great deal of flexibility and contingency in using words like *convenienter* and *oportebat* when trying to prove a point, though, and Boso points this out in the next

¹⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*. *CDH* lib. I, cap. 3 (II, 51).

paragraph: “*Omnia haec pulchra et quasi quaedam picturae suscipienda sunt. Sed si non est aliquid solidum super quod sedeant, non videntur infidelibus sufficere, cur deum ea quae dicimus pati voluisse credere debeamus.*”¹⁶ If the primary argument for the Incarnation and Atonement is one from “fittingness,” then it does not stand the test of logic, especially to non-Christians. Anselm acknowledges this from the beginning, but he does not abandon the language of “fittingness,” “appropriateness,” etc. entirely. He returns to this language in a small way at the conclusion of the work when discussing how it is that humanity benefits from the salvific work of the God-man: “*Quibus convenientius fructum et retributionem suae mortis attribuet quam illis, propter quos salvandos, sicut ratio veritatis nos docuit, hominem se fecit, et quibus, ut diximus, moriendo exemplum moriendi propter iustitiam dedit?*”¹⁷ It was “appropriate” for the reward given to the God-man to be redirected to humanity to allow for human salvation. This is the final step in Anselm’s argument, after which he makes a summary comment in which he references *satisfaction*: “*Puto me iam aliquantulum tuae satisfecisse quaestioni, quamvis hoc melior me facere plenius possit, et maiores atque plures quam meum aut mortale ingenium comprehendere valeat huius rei sint rationes.*”¹⁸ He contends that his argument is based on a firm foundation of logic, but he clearly includes what is “fitting” and “appropriate” in order to provide a more fully satisfactory answer. By extension, Anselm seems to imply that these elements are also fundamental parts of the *satisfaction* accomplished by the God-man for the salvation of humanity. Therefore, in addition to

¹⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 4 (II.51).

¹⁷ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 130).

¹⁸ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II, 131).

the element of breadth and fullness in *satisfaction*, one must include “fittingness.” True *satisfaction*, for Anselm, is both complete and fitting.

Satisfaction and Recompense

In Book I, chapter 11, Anselm introduces the primary use of *satisfaction* in the *CDH*: the necessary and sufficient solution to the problem of sin. In this context, “*satisfactio*” is most often translated as “*satisfaction*” and “recompense.” When used as a verb, the terms are accompanied by “give,” “make” or “pay” (as in “make recompense”). This understanding of *satisfaction* presumes much of the discussion of the terms “honor” and “debt” found in earlier chapters of this work, since it is the lack of honor that creates a need (or debt) that is filled by *satisfaction*. This is made clear in Anselm’s summary statement at the end of the chapter: “*Sic ergo debet omnis qui peccat, honorem deo quem rapuit solvere; et haec est satisfactio, quam omnis peccator deo debet facere.*”¹⁹ *Satisfaction* is something that is carried out in response to sin and on behalf of sinners. Anselm very quickly and clearly establishes the scope of this *satisfaction*: “*Nec sufficit solummodo reddere quod ablatum est, sed pro contumelia illata plus debet reddere quam abstulit.*”²⁰ The need for *satisfaction* in this case is not equivalent to the offense at the source of the need. Sin as an offense against God created a metaphysical “hole” that was much larger than the implement that created it. The lack of honor given to God was only the sin and not the need created by sin, even though it was a “lack” or “need” in and of itself. The need created by sin was constituted by both the lack of rendered honor and the dishonor associated with that lack of honor. This combination of a lack of honor and a state of dishonor must be met with *satisfaction* of the same magnitude. As discussed in

¹⁹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II.68-69).

²⁰ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 11 (II.68).

chapter two, sin constituted an offense of infinite magnitude, since any dishonoring of God is an immeasurable offense.

Given a need resulting from an offense to the divine honor of infinite magnitude, the question arises as to how to deal with this need. In Book I, chapter 12, Anselm raises the possibility of a resolution to the problem without *satisfaction*. To the question of whether the problem of sin can be solved by a pardon coming from divine mercy, Anselm makes the following reply: “*Sic dimittere peccatum non est aliud quam non punire. Et quoniam recte ordinare peccatum sine satisfactione non est nisi punire: si non punitur, inordinatum dimittitur.*”²¹ There are three options in the range of possibilities: *satisfaction*, punishment, or neither (which constitutes a disordered [“*inordinatum*”] state of affairs). Simple forgiveness falls into the “neither” category and is ruled out as unfitting by Anselm since it is tantamount to a disordered state, which is incompatible with divine will and ordinance. This option is clearly excluded by Anselm, since there is no possibility of inconsistency within God. The only remaining alternative to *satisfaction*, then, is punishment.²² Anselm explains the nature and efficacy of punishment of a human being as the following:

“...*deus eum invitum sibi torquendo subicit et sic se dominum eius esse ostendit, quod ipse homo voluntate fateri recusat. In quo considerandum quia, sicut homo peccando rapit quod dei est, ita deus puniendo aufert quod hominis est. Quippe non solum id suum alicuius esse dicitur quod iam possidet, sed quod in eius potestate est ut habeat. Quoniam ergo homo ita factus est, ut beatitudinem habere posset, si non peccaret: cum*

²¹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 12 (II.69).

²² He makes this situation clear at the end of Book I, chapter 13: “*Necesse est ergo, ut aut ablati honor solvatur aut poena sequatur. Alioquin aut sibi deus ipsi iustus non erit aut ad utrumque impotens erit; quod nefas est vel cogitare.*” - Ibid., *CDH* lib. I, cap. 13 (II, 71). This narrows the focus of his inquiry and sets up the discussion in Book I, chapter 14.

*propter peccatum beatitudine et omni bono privatur, de suo quamvis
invitus solvit quod rapuit...*²³

Punishment would remove the possibility for human beings to participate in the beatific vision and would be a condemnation to eternal death for all humanity. However, as Anselm explains in (perhaps inordinate) detail in the following chapters (Book I, chapters 16-18), humanity was created in part to fill out the complement of heavenly beings. Punishment of human beings for sin would leave that purpose unfulfilled and God would be in the position of thwarting His own efforts, another inconsistency that is impossible for God.²⁴

So, Anselm rules out the possibilities of dismissing sin outright and punishing humanity in order to make recompense for sin. The only option left, then, is *satisfaction* for sin. By detailing the faults of the rejected possibilities, Anselm also provides some insight into the nature of this *satisfaction*. First, *satisfaction* must be consistent with the order of God's nature and creation. Not only must it not violate the principles established by God, but it must also be aligned with them. In that way, *satisfaction* must fit into the order of creation, specifically the relationship between God and humanity. God must retain His role as Creator and humanity must retain its' role as part of creation. The earlier discussion of Anselm's use of "honor" highlighted the importance of this relationship. Anselm is convinced that *satisfaction* works to maintain the relationship between God and humanity. This conviction is informed by Anselm's rejection of the

²³ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 14 (II, 72).

²⁴ Anselm does not spell out this rationale explicitly, though it seems to follow from his reasoning. Punishment would seem to exclude humanity since it would be an eternal death sentence, ruling out eternal happiness. Instead of making this point, he focuses on the fact that punishment only restores the honor of God and does not remove the sin of humanity (see, for example, the illustration of the rich man and the pearl in Book I, chapter 19 and his concluding remarks in Book I, chapter 23).

idea that sin could be forgiven without any response to sin. This latter situation carries with it an alteration of the relationship between God and humanity, since the relationship that was formerly based on honor and worship now has to somehow incorporate dishonor and sin into its basis. This impossibility highlights the fact that, for Anselm, the correct solution must reinforce the principle that excluded the incorrect solution: the divine-human relationship of honor and worship must be preserved by *satisfaction*.

Additionally, *satisfaction* must also allow for human beings to fill out the complement of heavenly beings by completely removing sin and its effects from the ranks of humanity. Since punishment would result in the complete destruction of humanity, *satisfaction* must provide a means of salvation for humanity. Since punishment also fails to remove sin, *satisfaction* must provide a means for the removal of sin from humanity. This must be done wholly; it is not enough to simply counteract the effect of the first sin, but there must be a solution to all sin that affects human beings. *Satisfaction* must heal humanity from the compounded effects of sin and provide a means of restoration to the pre-sin state, which in turn allows for human beings to become heavenly beings and participate in the beatific vision.

One can gain insight into Anselm's use of *satisfaction* as recompense not only from the rejected alternatives, but also from the contextual descriptions he adds when he makes use of the term. The first instance in which Anselm expands on his meaning of the term is in Book I, chapter 15 when he lists *satisfaction* as recompense among the alternatives for solving the problem of sin: "*Ipsa namque perversitatis spontanea satisfactio vel a non satisfaciente poenae exactio – excepto hoc quia deus de malis multis*

modis bona facit – in eadem universitate suum tenent locum et ordinis pulchritudinem.”²⁵

Anselm here contrasts punishment with a voluntary or free-will recompense for sin (“*perversitatis spontanea satisfactio*”).²⁶ For Anselm, *satisfaction* is a completely free and independent act undertaken by the God-man. It was not necessitated or forced on Him by any external influence. It was also not an act undertaken out of ignorance: the God-man had complete understanding and control of what occurred.²⁷ This usage also indicates that recompense was an *active* process for Anselm – the God-man was the initiator and executor of all that took place. This is in contrast to the passive nature of punishment, which is beyond the control of those who are punished. *Satisfaction* is an active response to the problem of sin that is compatible with the Anselmian (and Augustinian) view that God is pure act and His activity (universally, not just with regard to humanity) is one unified act in which He moves everything else. All other beings receive the divine action and this case of recompense is no different. The God-man provided for the salvation of humanity and it is up to human beings to respond to that act of benevolence.

Another qualification for *satisfaction* as recompense is proportionality, according to Anselm. As referred to earlier in this chapter, Anselm valued proportionality within the context of fittingness. After deciding that *satisfaction* is the only option for human salvation, Anselm discusses the need for recompense to be proportional to the motivating offense. Once again, he appeals to divine sovereignty and the order of creation to make

²⁵ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. I, cap. 14 (II, 73).

²⁶ See also *Ibid.*, CDH lib. I, cap. 19 (II, 85) in which elaborates on his meaning of *satisfaction*: “...*sine satisfactione, id est sine debiti solutione spontanea*...”

²⁷ This point is important in order to clarify that the divine nature of the God-man did not simply wield the human nature for its own purpose. It was a perfectly free and unified action on the part of the God-man as man.

his case (via Boso): “*Aliter aliquatenus inordinatum maneret peccatum, quod esse non potest, si deus nihil relinquit inordinatum in regno suo. Sed hoc est praestitutum quia quamlibet parvum inconueniens impossibile in deo.*”²⁸ However, Anselm quickly points out that humanity can offer only what they already owe to God. Humans have no innate way to make any supererogatory offering to God. Still, the scope of satisfaction must meet or exceed the scope of sin, which is immeasurably great (or weighty – “*ponderis*”). He makes this clear in Book I, chapter 21:

- A. *Patet quia secundum quantitatem peccati exigit deus satisfactionem.*
- B. *Non possum negare.*
- A. *Non ergo satisfacis, si non reddis aliquid maius, quam sit id pro quo peccatum facere non debueras.*²⁹

This places an impossible burden on humanity, since it would require a perfect record of human submission to God to approach the requirement of offering something “proportional to the amount/size of sin” (“*secundum quantitatem peccati*”) and something that is clearly beyond human capacity to offer recompense “greater” than sin (“*maius*”). Anselm presses this point to not only advance his point that God must be introduced to the ranks of humanity in order for true *satisfaction* to be had, but he also sets the ground rules that he will later follow for elucidating what exactly constitutes *satisfaction*.³⁰

The last noteworthy context for Anselm’s use of *satisfaction* is his pairing with the words for “ought” – “*debere*,” “*debitum*,” etc.³¹ *Satisfaction* brings with it certain obligations and Anselm particularly focuses on the obligations related to the magnitude of the payment and the nature of the payer. The issue of magnitude has been discussed

²⁸ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*. CDH lib. I, cap. 20 (II, 86).

²⁹ Ibid., CDH lib. I, cap. 21 (II, 89).

³⁰ See the discussion later in this chapter and CDH Book II, Chapters 18-19.

³¹ For a full discussion of Anselm’s use of these terms, please see Chapter Four of this work.

earlier, so the issue of who ought to make *satisfaction* is worth exploring here. At the end of Book II, Chapter 6, Anselm comes to the following conclusion: “*Si ergo, sicut constat, necesse est ut de hominibus perficiatur illa superna civitas, nec hoc esse valet, nisi fiat praedicta satisfactio, quam nec potest facere nisi deus nec debet nisi homo: necesse est ut eam faciat deus-homo.*”³² Not only is *satisfaction* a need that ought to be met, but the obligation (or the “ought”) extends to *who* ought to carry it out. This is characterized both positively, as seen in the previous quotation, and negatively, as seen in the following question concerning whether God could assume non-Adamic humanity³³ in order to save Adamic humanity: “*Sed si novum hominem facit non ex ADAE genere, non pertinebit ad genus humanum quod natum est de ADAM. Quare non debebit satisfacere pro eo, quia non erit de illo.*”³⁴ While the one who pays/makes *satisfaction* must be a human, that one must be an Adamic human, since there is an inherent connection between the human beings who prompted the need for *satisfaction* and the human being who ought to make the *satisfaction*. In this case, there is an impetus stronger than mere “fittingness” that drives Anselm’s line of reasoning. It is clear, then, from the shades of meaning he employs in the context of obligation that Anselm is using the term and the idea of *satisfaction* in a complex and intentional way.

Satisfaction as Fulfillment

In the end, the defining chapter for Anselm’s understanding of *satisfaction* is book II, chapter 19. Here he defines what it was that the God-man accomplished in order

³² Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 6 (II, 101).

³³ Please refer to the previous chapter’s discussion of Hopkins’ critique regarding the possibility of salvation via a human being drawn from outside the lineage of Adam; this is the meaning of “non-Adamic humanity” being used here – some imagined “human” being created with no biological connection to Adam.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, CDH lib. II, cap. 8 (II, 102).

to make *satisfaction* via the Incarnation and Atonement. The death of the God-man was carried out to provide a benefit that would balance out the sin of humanity.³⁵ For Anselm, this necessitates a response in the form of a gift from God in order to recognize the greatness of the action of the God-man: “*Immo necesse esse video, ut pater filio retribuat. Alioquin aut iniustus videretur esse si nollet, aut impotens si non posset; quae a deo aliena sunt.*”³⁶ The gift follows necessarily on the salvific activity of the God-man and the last remaining topic for Anselm concerns what should be done with it. Since the God-man is God and needs nothing, he envisions a transfer of the gift to humanity that would be a natural next step:

Quibus convenientius fructum et retributionem suae mortis attribuet quam illis, propter quos salvandos, sicut ratio veritatis nos docuit, hominem se fecit, et quibus, ut diximus, moriendo exemplum moriendi propter iustitiam dedit? Frustra quippe imitatores eius erunt, si meriti eius participes non erunt. Aut quos iustius faciet haeredes debiti quo ipse non eget, et exundantiae suae plenitudinis, quam parentes et fratres suos, quos aspicit tot et tantis debitis obligatos egestate tabescere in profundo miseriarum, ut eis dimittatur quod pro peccatis debent, et detur quo propter peccata carent?³⁷

The sharing of the gift with humanity emphasizes the necessity of the God-man to be both divine and human. The process also ties together the previous issues of honor (by restoring the relationship between God and humanity to its proper status), justice (by showing the supreme justice of saving the human beings to whom the God-man is so closely related) and debt (by explicitly stating that the gift allows for the debt to be excused). *Satisfaction* in this way is the culmination of all of the previous issues discussed both in this work and the *CDH*. Anselm clearly takes this approach since he

³⁵ Anselm starts by assuming this: “*Quantum autem sit quod filius sponte dedit, non est opus exponere.*” - Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II.130).

³⁶ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II.130).

³⁷ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II.130-131).

plays up the meaning of *satisfaction* as a full answer: “*Puto me iam aliquantulum tuae satisfecisse quaestioni...*”³⁸ Finally, in his summary remarks at the end of this chapter, he notes that “...*ab homine deus exigebat ut dabolium vinceret, et qui per peccatum deum offenderat, per iustitiam satisfaceret.*”³⁹ The ultimate *satisfaction* came through righteousness – the righteousness of the God-man whose death counteracted the sin of humanity and the righteousness that was counted for the benefit of humanity as a result of the gift following upon the death of the God-man. *Satisfaction* ties up all of the loose ends and provides a full divinely empowered response to any challenges to the order of creation.

Analogue for *Satisfaction* – Rule of Benedict

Having earlier discussed and rejected the legal understanding of *satisfaction* as an influence on Anselm’s own usage, it is worthwhile to explore other possible influences (whether positive or negative). One influence that would undoubtedly be at the forefront of Anselm’s mind (in this matter and in almost any other area of his life) is the Rule of St. Benedict (RB). As a monk and abbot, the RB would have been read, understood and internalized to the point that it would likely have been difficult for Anselm to distinguish between his own theological and liturgical intuition and that of the RB. Not only would the RB have guided his formation as a human being and as a member of a monastic community, but it would have also reinforced many of the foundational theological concepts that play a role in the *CDH*, including honor, righteousness and order. While the Bible (likely the only work with which Anselm would have been more familiar than the RB) did not include a highly-developed understanding of the term *satisfaction* in the

³⁸ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II.131).

³⁹ Ibid., *CDH* lib. II, cap. 19 (II.131).

few occurrences of the term, the RB clearly and intentionally did so. In the RB, *satisfaction* is used repeatedly to describe the public restoration of monks after having committed public offenses. This is primarily a penitential context, since *satisfaction* is always used as a corrective and restorative measure.

Table – *Satisfaction* Occurrences in the RB

Word	RB ⁴⁰	Page (Fry)
satisfactionem	24.4	220
satisfactione	24.7	220
satisfactionem	27.3	222-224
satisfactione	43.6	242
satisfactionem	43.11	244
satisfaciat	43.12	244
satisfactionem	43.16	244
satisfaciant	44. <i>Titulus</i>	244
satisfactum	44.3	244
satisfaciat	44.8	246
satisfactione	44.8	246
satisfaciant	44.9	246
satisfactione	45.1	246
satisfaciens	71.8	292

Variants of “*satisfactio*” occur 14 times in the RB, although the concept is referenced many times over in the various contexts. The majority of the references occur fittingly in chapters 43, 44 and 45, which deal with excommunication and restoration. Chapters 24, 27 and 71 also address the issue of excommunication, though they are not as focused on the issue as the aforementioned chapters. Separation from the other monks and from the daily work is the punishment for offenses until *satisfaction* is made:

Privati autem a mensae consortio ista erit ratio ut in oratorio psalmum aut antiphonam non imponat, neque lectionem recitet, usque ad satisfactionem. Refectionem autem cibi post fratrum refectionem solus

⁴⁰ References are to Chapter:Section according to the numbering in the Fry Latin-English edition. The page numbers reference the same work.

*accipiat, ut, si verbi gratia fratres reficiunt sexta hora, ille frater nona, si fratres nona, ille vespera, usque dum satisfactione congrua veniam consequatur.*⁴¹

Whereas the offense necessarily brings separation (as both punishment for the offender and an example and preventative measure for the other monks), *satisfaction* brings pardon, reconciliation and restoration. In this case, *satisfaction* is used broadly, without any detailed information concerning what constitutes *satisfaction*. Presumably, that is left up to the abbot or someone else designated for the purpose of disciplining the monk(s). The only qualification or specification in this case is the word “*congrua*,” which indicates that the *satisfaction* must be consistent or proportional with the offense in question.⁴² Otherwise, pardon (“*veniam*”) does not follow without *satisfaction*.

In the RB, chapters 43-45 contain the bulk of the instances of *satisfaction*. Here, the context is the correction of offenses committed with regard to the work of God (“*opus Dei*”). In this context, there is a clear order of punishment/separation, *satisfaction*, then restoration:

*Quod si quis in nocturnis vigiliis post gloriam psalmi nonagesimi quarti, quem propter hoc omnino subtrahendo et morose volumus dici, occurrerit, non stet in ordine suo in choro, sed ultimus omnium stet aut in loco quem talibus neglegentibus seorsum constituerit abbas, ut videantur ab ipso vel ab omnibus, usque dum completo opere Dei publica satisfactione paeniteat. Ideo autem eos in ultimo aut seorsum iudicavimus debere stare ut, visi ab omnibus, vel pro ipsa verecundia sua emendent...*⁴³

⁴¹ Saint Benedict, *Rb 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*, trans. Timothy Fry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981), 24.4-7 (220).

⁴² This appears to coincide with Anselm’s use of “*conveniens*” to describe the fittingness of *satisfaction*. While “*congrua*” refers more to proportionality, Anselm expands on the same idea with his use of fittingness to express less quantitative and more qualitative consistency.

⁴³ Benedict, *Rule of St. Benedict*, 43.4-7 (242-244).

The dual purpose of the punishment is clear here: a public example for other monks (“*ut videantur ab ipso vel ab omnibus*”)⁴⁴ and to bring shame and correction to the offender (“*visi ab omnibus, vel pro ipsa verecundia sua emendent*”). However, the primary purpose is the correction of the offender, since being made a public example in the sight of all other members of the community is intended to increase the shame that should drive the offender to correct his ways. Even if, for whatever reason, punishment or correction is not prescribed, pardon must be given as a replacement and *satisfaction* must still follow: “...*nisi forte abbas licentiam dederit remissione sua, ita tamen ut satisfaciatur reus ex hoc.*”⁴⁵ Correction (whether in the form of punishment or pardon) is clearly a necessary precursor to *satisfaction*.

The RB specifically highlights prostration as one form of correction leading to *satisfaction* in chapter 44: “*Qui pro gravibus culpis ab oratorio et a mensa excommunicantur, hora qua opus Dei in oratorio percelebratur, ante fores oratorii prostratus iaceat nihil dicens, nisi tantum posito in terra capite, stratus pronus omnium de oratorio exeuntium pedibus; et hoc tamdiu faciat usque dum abbas iudicaverit satisfactum esse.*”⁴⁶ In addition to prostration at the oratory entrance, prostration at the feet of the abbot and prostration at the place of work are mentioned as possible elements of *satisfaction*. In this section, the key to the nature of the *satisfaction* is the judgment of the abbot. Prostration in the oratory is to be done “...*usque dum abbas iudicaverit satisfactum esse*” and prostration at the place of work occurs “*usque dum ei iubeat iterum*

⁴⁴ It is important to note that the process of *satisfaction* is effective not only for the one who committed the offense, but also for the surrounding community. While some critics of Anselm draw a correlation to the punishment of an individual, it is clear even in the small role that punishment plays for Anselm that his influence is a process of correction in the context of community and not one offender being punished/corrected in a vacuum.

⁴⁵ Benedict, *Rule of St. Benedict*, 43.11-12 (244).

⁴⁶ Ibid., 44.1-3 (244).

*abbas ut quiescat iam ab hac satisfactione.*⁴⁷ The extent of the actions that lead to and accomplish *satisfaction* is subject to the judgment of the abbot. The abbot has the freedom to vary the corrective actions to more or less extents depending on the magnitude of the offense involved: “*Qui vero pro levibus culpis excommunicantur tantum a mensa, in oratorio satisfaciunt usque ad iussionem abbatis; hoc perficiunt usque dum benedicat et dicat: Sufficit.*”⁴⁸ In this case, the extent of the corrective action is temporally based: the same action is performed longer for greater offenses. The RB gives a great deal of freedom to the authority figure involved (the abbot, in this case) to judge what form and to what degree the actions taken for *satisfaction* should be, even allowing for complete pardon.

Potential Influence of the RB on Anselm and the *CDH*

If nothing else, the RB would have provided a relevant comparator for Anselm’s use of *satisfaction* in the *CDH*. However, considering the influence that it held over the daily lives of Anselm and his audience (either current monks or people who had spent time in a monastic setting), Anselm’s usage would have certainly brought to mind monastic *satisfaction* and perhaps even personal experiences in which they made *satisfaction* for offenses or imposed correction on others in order for *satisfaction* to be made. When Anselm discussed how heavy the weight of sin is in Book I, Chapter 21, the minds of Anselm and his readers would have easily made the connection to the weight of an offense in a monastic context. It would have been clear to the audience that the sin of humanity went far beyond any sin that was anticipated in the RB. When the discussion turned to how the life of Christ was recompense paid to God for the sins of mankind, a

⁴⁷ See above citation and Ibid., 44.8 (246).

⁴⁸ Ibid., 44.9-10 (246).

connection would have been easily made with the corrective actions necessary to make *satisfaction* in the RB. What Christ did went far beyond any number of prostrations or other corrective actions at the disposal of an abbot in the monastic life envisioned by the RB. Anselm's lengthy characterization of the weight of the offense and the payment made for sin served to highlight (albeit implicitly) that the initial sin of humanity had far-reaching implications, beyond the scope of human categories of righteousness and justice. The RB provided a tool for the abbot to make judgments based on divine example, even though the scopes were clearly far apart.

Here is where the primary difference is found, though: the degree to which the corrective actions provided *satisfaction* relative to the magnitude of the offense was to be judged by the abbot, according to the RB. This was necessary for the monastic context, since there was obviously a wide variety of offenses, so a wide variety of punishments was needed to fit the crimes. However, the *CDH* deals with one "crime" only. In the monastic context, the first task would have been to separate the offender and assess the magnitude of the offense. So, in the *CDH*, humanity was separated from eternal life by sin and Anselm weighed the magnitude of sin against the One offended. So, the magnitude of the offense was considered to be immeasurably large, in accordance with the fact that it was God who was offended by sin. Much like the discussion in chapters 43 and 44 of the RB, Anselm weighs the potential means of *satisfaction*, including pardon.⁴⁹ Still, the circumstances of the initial sin of humanity dictated that the only one to judge the nature and magnitude of the sin is God. Further, God, as the offended party, determined that the corrective action must be equivalent to His own nature and His honor

⁴⁹ See *CDH* Book I, Chapters 12-15.

that were offended by sin. An offender in the monastic context sinned primarily against the rule (and, by extension, God) and the abbot (using the rule as a reference or starting point) determined the corrective action. The rule served as both a mediator and third-party in the monastic context. It provided an objective standard of right and wrong and provided guidelines, if not specifications, for punishments relative to offenses committed. This was fitting for the context, but this is not the context of the sin of humanity and, likewise, this is not the context of the *satisfaction* for that sin. There was no third-party rule or abbot to stand in for the judgment of God. This returns the discussion to the idea of the direct relationship between God and humanity. *Satisfaction* has a defined role in the context of that relationship and any other use of the term must carry with it the qualification that it is out of context. While some of the earlier-identified key elements of *satisfaction* are present in both contexts (proportionality, fittingness, etc.), the purpose and mechanism of *satisfaction* are clearly different.

In the RB, the goal of *satisfaction* is to reintegrate the offender into the community in such a way that both the offender and the community will recognize that appropriate corrective measures have been taken. At the end of the process, though, the status quo is the same as it was before the offense. While the state of human beings in the beatific vision is comparable to the original created state (without sin), the two are by no means identical. The end of the Incarnation and Atonement is eternal rest in the goodness of God and the perfection of the original creation. The end of the corrective process in the RB is the restoration of the offender to his prior standing in the community. The offender could easily (and would likely) offend again in some way. *Satisfaction* in the RB is limited to the earthly, human sphere of the monastic life with no

direct impact on the spiritual realm (other than the merit of obedience and righteousness). The lofty goal of the *satisfaction* involved in the *CDH* presses the idea of *satisfaction* to the highest and ultimate extent. The *satisfaction* involved is *satisfaction* once and for all, without any exception or qualification. There is no possibility for reversal or repetition since the end state is eternal. Anselmian *satisfaction* is *satisfaction* in its fullest and perfect form. The *satisfaction* described in the RB is an imperfect instantiation of the ideal *satisfaction* that Anselm endeavored to describe in the *CDH*. Since the RB was temporally prior to the *CDH*, Anselm may be best viewed as perhaps attempting to reverse-engineer the system of *satisfaction* he knew through the RB to capture the pure *satisfaction* that is appropriate for the salvation of humanity. However, Anselm himself would have likely considered his own work to draw upon scripture and first principles and not directly from the RB, since he would have viewed the RB as drawing upon those same sources.⁵⁰

The Rule of Benedict provides a clearly influential analogue for Anselm's use of *satisfaction* in the *CDH*. It should be understood, though, that Anselm lays out a broader and significantly different context for his own usage. While the RB would have held a significant influence over Anselm's understanding of *satisfaction*, Anselm attempted to use the term in a way that transcended the usage in the RB. Anselm had a higher and broader purpose in mind in the *CDH*: the salvation of humanity is a far cry from the order of a monastic community. Apart from the differences of scope (and perhaps a result thereof), the monastic context of the RB involves different persons in the *satisfaction* process. The abbot plays a role in judging the amount of corrective action needed. In

⁵⁰ The scriptural foundation for *satisfaction* will be examined in a later portion of this chapter.

this case, the abbot does not quite stand in for God, since the abbot himself is not also the offended party (rather, the offense is committed against the rule and, by extension, God). This is the most delicate area of comparison, since critics of Anselm tend to compare the corrective actions involved in *satisfaction* to imperfect instances in human communities. The monastic community is a natural comparator, but Anselm evidently wanted to reach beyond the comparators to establish an ideal image of *satisfaction*. He did so by considering and rejecting as imperfect some elements of the *satisfaction* process in the RB (pardon, quantitative punishment, etc.). In the end, Anselm was attempting to convey an idea of *satisfaction* that would have resonated with people familiar with the RB, but would have been noticeably different. I would contend that Anselm used those differences to emphasize the incomprehensibly greater gravity and scope of the salvific work carried out by the God-man in the *CDH*.

Scripture and *Satisfaction*

Even though the word “*satisfaction*” does not occur in any passage in the Bible that deals with the Incarnation or Atonement,⁵¹ I argue that Anselm used Biblical concepts in developing his usage of the term. Ultimately, Anselm would not agree that the ideas conveyed by *satisfaction* in the *CDH* were extra-Biblical or, as some critics have contended, contrary to Biblical models for human salvation.⁵² John McIntyre offers a helpful way of thinking about Anselm’s use of *satisfaction* in contrast to the approach of many critics:

⁵¹ The instances of variants of “*satisfactio*” in the Vulgate edition of the Bible deal are found in mundane contexts in which the term is used mostly to refer to an answer of some sort. See the discussion earlier in this chapter of I Peter 3:15.

⁵² There are numerous examples of this in the 19th and 20th centuries, but for a particularly recent and pointed example, see Daniel Saunders, “A Theological Assessment of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo*,” *Churchman* 123, no. 2 (2009).

St. Anselm's procedure in the *Cur Deus Homo* is not: Given an *a priori* idea of satisfaction, God must do so-and-so and do such-and-such in order to save fallen mankind; but rather: Given that God's attributes are mercy, justice, righteousness, omnipotence, love and (if we may for the present call it an attribute) *aseitas*, then He will save mankind in a manner which is not only conformable to these attributes but, in fact, is more completely expressive of them than any other event in the whole history of the relations of God and man, namely, by means of a satisfaction offered by Himself.⁵³

I would like to adapt that procedure in this section by examining Anselm's use of scripture with regard to the ideas of honor, justice and debt that inform his usage of *satisfaction*. David Neelands has pointed to Anselm's use of Matthew 6:12 as a scriptural basis for his discussion of "debt."⁵⁴ As discussed earlier in this work on the topic of "debt," I argue that Jesus' approach to "debt" in this passage indicates both the nature of debt and owing and the nature of the relationship between God and humans. Human forgiveness ought to follow as an imitation of divine forgiveness of the debt of sin. This reference, coupled with the universality of human sin as expressed in Romans 3:23, indicates that a debt must be paid on behalf of all humanity. Romans 3:23 also characterizes the effect of sin on the relationship between humanity and God: all humans lack the "*gloria*" of God. I take this to be indicative of a disruption of the honor relationship, as I have articulated it in the earlier chapter on "honor." The failure of humanity to render honor to God brings with it a separation from the honor or glory of

⁵³ McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo*., 89.

⁵⁴ David Neelands, "Substitution and the Biblical Background to *Cur Deus Homo*," *The Saint Anselm Journal* 2, no. 2 (2005)., 83.

God. This separation runs contrary to the will of God in creation, though, since God created human beings to fill out the complement of heavenly beings.⁵⁵

Given this scriptural background, it would have been natural for Anselm to believe that he had a scriptural warrant for his understanding of *satisfaction*. All human beings had been separated from God by sin and were in need of reconciliation with God through salvation. To Anselm, the universality of sin required a form of *satisfaction* that provided for universal human salvation (though certainly without any guarantee of such). Thus, I argue that the salvation of humanity via a system of *satisfaction* would have matched up with the scriptural story of Jesus Christ saving humanity from sin through His death, burial and resurrection. This can be seen in part by examining a number of passages in the book of Hebrews that align closely to Anselm's views in the *CDH* even though he did not reference them directly and Schmitt did not reference them in his critical edition. There are some points that are nearly identical: human participation in salvation through obedience (Hebrews 5:9), the necessity of the death of the God-man for redemption (Hebrews 9:15-16), the one act of the God-man is sufficient for all (Hebrews 9:12, 25-26).⁵⁶ This would have been the "doing enough" and meeting the need of humanity that *satisfaction* aims to accomplish, in Anselm's view. Although the exact language and details of his argument are not all directly identifiable in scripture, Anselm seems to be on solid scriptural ground for the building blocks that make up his argument that culminates in his concept of *satisfaction*.

⁵⁵ See *CDH* Book I, Chapters 16-18. As I have mentioned earlier, Anselm does not seem to have direct scriptural evidence for this, but he proceeds as if he does (and it could probably be developed by pulling a number of scriptural passages together).

⁵⁶ I am grateful to personal conversation with David Neelands and the discussion following Neelands' paper at the Second Saint Anselm Conference at Saint Anselm College in April 2002 for the identification of some of these references.

The Place of *Satisfaction* in Anselm's Scheme

Interpreters of Anselm are correct to highlight *satisfaction* as the overriding theme of the *Cur Deus Homo*. However, it has been the purpose of this chapter to emphasize that this must be done in concert with a proper understanding of what Anselm meant by *satisfaction*. It is not enough to merely look to Anselm's own social context or a reader's own 21st century context to establish a working meaning of *satisfaction*. Instead, I argue that Anselm's influences and the broader purpose of his work in the *CDH* play key roles in the way that Anselm used the term. It is clear from Anselm's usage in the *CDH* that he was not merely appropriating a legal term in the manner of Tertullian. Nor was he borrowing a term from the feudal social context of the world outside of his monastic life. Rather, just as his goal in the *CDH* was to present a refined argument for the necessity of the Incarnation of the God-man, he employed a refined usage of *satisfaction* that stripped away the imperfections of even the familiar monastic usage and conformed to the structure of scripture and first principles upon which he based his entire argument. The *CDH*, then, does not represent a poisoning of Atonement theology with feudal verbiage. Instead, it represents a refinement and appropriation of the most suitable language to describe the Incarnation of the God-man, without concern for imperfect or improper uses of the language.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In the *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm attempted to cast a wide net in his discussion of a narrow topic. The criticism leveled at this work has charged that not only did Anselm fail to accomplish his stated goals, but also that the goals themselves were improperly set. In the preceding chapters I have endeavored to show that Anselm was consistent with his own philosophical system and came to a reasonable conclusion that stands the test of both logic and time. While some critics have claimed that he improperly applied the concepts and terminology of feudal society to the central doctrine of Christian theology, I have argued that his use of “honor,” “justice,” “debt” and “satisfaction” was an approach that guided him through his argument in a way that was consistent with scripture and tradition. Further, Anselm was not alone in the steps of his process or in the conclusion he reached. In this final chapter, I hope to bring together the points made in the individual preceding topical chapters in order to evaluate Anselm’s work as a whole in the *CDH*.

There are three principles (of a theological/methodological nature) that were employed by Anselm and stand against the assertions of critics who contend that Anselm improperly applied concepts based in feudal society at key points in his argument:

- 1) The relationship between God and humanity was established at creation and all activity between the two must be compatible with that relationship

- 2) God acts in accordance with His divine nature
- 3) God's perfect activity cannot be compromised, marred or somehow left unfinished.

These principles have been outlined at various points in previous chapters of this work and now I wish to draw them together to show how they fit into the comprehensive picture of Anselm's methodology. In each case, I will show how Anselm drew upon scriptural and Patristic sources in the ways that he incorporated these principles into his theological standpoint. I will then point out the specific criticisms that are answered by each theological principle in order to draw out a unique perspective on what Anselm was trying to accomplish in the *CDH*. Finally, I will evaluate the successes and shortcomings in Anselm's approach and point the way toward further steps in fully understanding the *CDH* and the positive ways that Anselm did include imagery from feudal society in his work.

Divine-Human Relationship

The reason that I examined honor as the first example of Anselm's language is that his entire argument is based on the relationship between God and humanity that was established at the creation of all things. For Anselm, this represented a strong and easily accessible foundation for discussion with non-Christian unbelievers. Anselm unpacked the concepts that he viewed as implicit in the nature of creation (given the nature of God and the nature of created beings) and used "honor" to express the structure of relationship that was established necessarily when God created things that existed apart from God Himself. Anselm considered this to be an elementary idea, even though it played an important role in the development of his argument. However, this is likely the idea that is

most often confused with a concept derived from feudal society. The difference is that the relationship between Creator and creation reflects the perfect order of the universe and the balanced nature of the relationship must be maintained out of necessity. The feudal relationship between lord and servant may reflect a societal order, but it is an imperfect order that does not need to be maintained out of necessity. Anselm was very clear on the distinction between God and all that was not God and he would not have confused or conflated the two types of relationship.

Divine Consistency

The simple idea that God acts in accordance with His divine nature may seem elementary, but it is crucial to properly understanding Anselm's logic in the *CDH*. While some critics may find fault with Anselm for his frequent use of the principle of justice, it would have been incomprehensible to Anselm for God to compromise justice in any way since, as was explained in chapter three, God is Justice in the same way that God is Love, Mercy, Goodness, etc. Anselm made this point in the *Monologion* and McIntyre spent most of his book on Anselm articulating the consistency of divine activity with regard to the specific principle of divine aseity.¹ This has been explained in detail earlier, but it is worth a repeated emphasis: the idea that God would somehow compromise one divine principle for the sake of another in some modern or even post-modern narrative in which mercy defeats justice would have been incomprehensible to Anselm and one should not expect that he would have considered this. He clearly addressed this in book I, chapter 12 and perhaps it is this direct rejection that bothers critics so much. In Anselm's works in general and the *CDH* in particular, there is a certainty that the perfect nature of God

¹ John McIntyre, *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-Interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo* (Edinburgh,: Oliver and Boyd, 1954).

can and should be carried forward to all logical conclusions, even in the face of the most difficult challenges. This is clear in his explanation (and later defense) of his ontological argument and especially in the *CDH*. “Justice” and “necessity,” then, should not be taken as indications that Anselm portrayed God as an unflinching enforcer of the rule of law, but rather they should be understood as Anselmian expressions of divine consistency. This divine consistency does not mean that punishment, violence, etc. are part of God’s plan...just the opposite, in fact. In spite of sin and the seeming condemnation of humanity that would accompany it (by human law and logic), Anselm argues that God’s benevolent plan for creation wins out in the end. The goodness of God reigns supreme, even if events that occur in the interim may seem difficult to reconcile with divine goodness.

Perfect Divine Activity

This emphasis on the consistency of the perfect divine nature leads to the next point in a straightforward way: the activity of God is perfect and cannot be compromised in any way, even if it may appear that way from a limited (particularly human) perspective. Again, Anselm addressed this issue directly in book I, chapters 13 through 15 using the example of divine honor. He was forced to address it since his argument depended on both the ideas that sin marked a violation of the honor of God and that the honor of God cannot be violated. Sin was a problem for God that must have had a resolution of necessity. Anselm argues that the God-man was that necessary answer and that it was, accordingly, part of the same divine action as was the creation of all things. At times, this involves agreement by the audience with Anselm on his view of the eternity of God, but this was an assumption that he apparently felt that theistic

unbelievers would be willing to make.² This would have been a safe assumption, considering he was responding to supposed charges that the doctrine of the God-man is unfitting for a perfect God. A perfect God would not change and would not engage in any activity that is incomplete or inconsistent. Anselm took his opponents' concern for consistency and turned it into a situation in which the burden of proof is placed on those valuing consistency to show that God could consistently ordain and carry out human existence in light of the condition of sin without entering the world à la the God-man.

These three principles that I would argue are hallmarks of Anselm's theology both as a whole and in the *CDH* are not simply medieval but are shared with, if not inaugurated and established by, patristic theology. Anselm's language in the *CDH* was consistent with these principles and part of the unique way that he expressed those principles so that they would be accessible to his audience. It is not difficult to find evidence that these principles were fundamental to patristic theology and Athanasius is, perhaps, the best case for this. Anatolios characterized Athanasius as desiring "to show that the fact of the incarnation is consistent with who God is, and with God's general way of relating to creation from the beginning."³ In the introduction to a translation of Athanasius' *DI*, Edward R. Hardy noted Athanasius' desire to counter Arian views on the divinity of Christ and so he emphasized the full divinity in the Incarnation: "In On the Incarnation and the early Nicene controversy Athanasius stood for the true deity of the

² These unbelievers would presumably be Jews and/or Muslims. There was a strong tradition of Platonism (which would be the mostly likely source – via Augustine – for Anselm's view of eternity) among both Jews and Muslims.

³ Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought* (London: Routledge, 1998), 39.

divinity of Christ.”⁴ There was clearly a focus not only on the divine power of the God-man, but also on the effectiveness of the work of God in the world. Athanasius made this explicit in chapter 6 with his comparison of God to a worker or artist whose work must be completed and maintained without corruption: “...it would have been especially improper that the handiwork of God in mankind should come to nought, either through their neglect, or through the deceit of demons.”⁵ Athanasius clearly followed these same principles found in the *CDH* throughout his Christological work.⁶ It has been well-noted already that Anselm owes much of his theological foundation to Augustine (and his Christian neo-Platonic approach to theology). Augustine incorporated these three principles in his own work on innumerable occasions, but one place in which they all come together is in the *Confessions* at the end of book ten and the beginning of book eleven. Augustine here works “backward” from the redemption of humanity by Christ and then turns to Creation and the perfection of God.

In this light, I argue that it is difficult, if not simply wrong, to pursue the claim that Anselm’s approach in the *CDH* was different from that of the church fathers in the patristic era.⁷ Therefore, I contend that Anselm’s language in the *CDH* should be understood as an aspect of the ingenuity of his work and not as a failing thereof.

Although this may not be obvious from a *prima facie* reading of his work, a serious and

⁴ Edward Rochie Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*, The Library of Christian Classics ; V. 3 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954)., 49.

⁵ Athanasius, *Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Robert W. Thomson, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971)., 149 (*DI* 6).

⁶ In addition to *De Incarnatione*..., see his *Orationes Contra Arianos*.

⁷ For those who place importance on the distinction, I would argue that Anselm is consistent with both Eastern and Western church fathers. He was clearly influenced by the Western church as the context in which he was trained. Although Gasper’s work has pushed (or perhaps established) the limits on scholarly speculation concerning possible Eastern influences on Anselm, I would argue that his work and the comparative work done previously here is enough to show that Anselm’s work in the *CDH* is also consistent with that of the Eastern church fathers.

thorough investigation of Anselm and his approach to theology should make this clear. While previous interpreters of Anselm have engaged Anselm's work in the *CDH* in detailed interpretive works, too many have failed to consider the aforementioned principles that guided Anselm's theological method. It is my hope that this work will prompt further consideration and discussion of Anselm's teaching in the *CDH* and lead to a renewed appreciation for a theologian who was able to integrate traditional Christian theological principles into a discussion of contemporary issues.

Anselm and Feudal Language

While I maintain that the language that Anselm used in the *CDH* can be interpreted as representative of a Biblical and Patristic approach to the subject at hand, there is no question that Anselm attempted to invoke some feudal imagery. The only question is to what extent he did this and how important it was for his argument. The clearest example of such imagery is the parable of the king and the sinful city in book II, chapter 16.⁸ Anselm's explanation of how a larger group of people can participate in reconciliation that has been brought about through the righteousness of one individual appears to be a story plucked out of feudal society and filled with contingent claims (like the king choosing to allow future pardons on the basis of the one reconciliation). However, it clearly appears after Anselm's argument has been made logically complete and, in the words of Southern, this parable ("*similitudinem*") and other similar passages in the *CDH* illustrate principles "from the facts of everyday life. They are

⁸ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Franciscus Salesius Schmitt, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1938), *CDH* lib. II, cap. 16 (II, 118-119).

complementary expressions of Anselm's argument."⁹ They are complementary to the argument, but they are not fundamental parts thereof. If anything, Anselm used similar passages and language intentionally to make his work more accessible to a wider audience. He would have been conscious of the potentially greater reach of his work as archbishop compared to his influence as a monk or even abbot of Bec. Further, if we take Anselm seriously that he aspired to reach out to the "unbelievers," it is reasonable to think that he may have sought more common ground than the shared theological principles of Jews and Christians (and perhaps even Muslims). He may have considered Feudalism and feudal language to be a commonly understood source for similes and parables in order to communicate his argument effectively. I hope that I have shown that the instances of supposedly feudal language that appear in the heart of Anselm's argument constitute a clearly different usage. At those points, he was not seeking to illustrate but to build a sound argument. Anselm's theological training and impulses would have dictated that he choose language that was consistent with biblical and patristic tradition in those cases and leave the social and cultural illustrations for a different section. I contend that is precisely the explanation for the way that Anselm used language that was evocative of feudal society in the *CDH*.

Biblical Atonement

In the interest of a balanced perspective on Anselm's work in the *CDH*, it is important to point out the ways in which Anselm's language did not convey all aspects of the Incarnation that are present in scripture and tradition. While, as Rogers has pointed

⁹ R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and His Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life and Thought, 1059-1130*, The Birkbeck Lectures, 1959 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 114.

out,¹⁰ Anselm's language has clear scriptural precedent, there are some scriptural themes that do not clearly fit into Anselm's scheme in the *CDH*. For example, the idea of humanity being reconciled to God via the blood of Christ is not found in Anselm's work. This is clearly an important motif not only within sacramental theology but also within the theology of the New Testament, particularly as expressed by Paul (in Romans 5, for instance). As mentioned earlier, Anselm intentionally focused on high-level issues involved in the Incarnation and Atonement and in this case, the closest he came was to discuss the necessity of the death of Christ. While it may be said that the motif of the blood of Christ in the New Testament may be easily replaced by discussing the death of Christ, it would be a neglectful hermeneutical approach to conflate the two. There are too many passages of scripture and too many layers of meaning involved with the idea of the blood to equate it with the death of Christ, so this seems to be a clear area in which Anselm's work in the *CDH* is not comprehensive. The degree to which this constitutes a failing on Anselm's part depends on one's own theological perspective, though. A similar detail to which Anselm pays little attention is the role of the resurrection. It is mentioned only in passing in the discussion of the way in which human salvation results from the death of the God-man (in book II, chapter 19). The resurrection seems to be relegated to an unspoken assumption that life could not be brought back to humanity without the resurrection of the God-man. It is possible that Anselm avoided discussion of the resurrection since this topic lies at the heart of devil-ransom theology. According to the latter, the resurrection represents the triumph of Christ over the devil and marks the

¹⁰ Katherin A. Rogers, "A Defense of Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* Argument," in *Philosophical Theology: Reason and Theological Doctrine*, ed. Michael Baur, *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (Bronx, NY: American Catholic Philosophical Association, 2001), 197.

release of humanity from the control of the devil. Since Anselm directly rejected this interpretation of the Incarnation and Atonement, it is likely that he would not have been interested in drawing unnecessary attention to the core tenet of the opposing redemption theory.

Final Assessment

The real genius and importance of Anselm's work was that he managed to explain the central tenet of Christian theology in a way that simultaneously embraced scripture and tradition along with the most progressive philosophical and social perspectives of his time. All of these issues come together in the language that he used to express his ideas in the *CDH*. Anselm's use of terms such as "honor," "justice," "debt" and "satisfaction" allowed him to convey a traditional doctrine in an approach that was innovative and in language that was accessible to the widest possible audience of his day. In the case of each term, where some critics have found faulty theological language, I have tried to point out that Anselm successfully uses his language to point his audience to high-level theological issues that would justify the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, even to some non-Christians. Instead of a system of hierarchical obligations, I have argued that Anselm used "honor" to express the mutual relationship of love between God and humanity. Instead of proceeding according to strict legal rules, I have argued that Anselm's use of "justice" was indicative of an emphasis on the goodness and consistency of God. Instead of reducing the core of Christian dogma to a financial transaction, I have argued that Anselm used "debt" in a complex and comprehensive way to illustrate the order of creation and the sovereignty of God. Instead of representing a heartless God with offended sensibilities, I have argued that Anselm used "satisfaction" to express the

wholeness of divine action and need for a resolution to all things that reflects the goodness of God. While some members of his audience over the years have taken him up on his offer to receive “*correctionem*,” I would contend that many of those who have done so have not thoroughly considered “*si rationabiliter fit*.”¹¹ Anselm was too brilliant a thinker, too careful a writer to have unwittingly or indiscriminately incorporated language drawn from feudal society that would have compromised the biblical and patristic traditions that he held in such high regard. Instead, I argue that he used the language that has drawn so much scrutiny in an intentional way to draw the issue at hand into the contemporary arena in order to demonstrate the fittingness and greatness of Christian theology.

¹¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Opera Omnia*, CDH lib. II, cap. 22 (II, 133).

Appendix A

Terminology Usage in the *CDH*

This appendix lists the occurrences of the terms examined in this dissertation in the Latin text of the *Cur Deus Homo* found in F.S. Schmitt's critical edition. Attempts have been made to catalogue every reasonable variant of *honor*, *iustitia*, *debitum* and *satisfactio*. This includes privative and oppositional prefixes along with verbal and nominal forms.

Term = Word from the text of the *Cur Deus Homo*

CDH = Location in the *Cur Deus Homo* (Book.Chapter)

Schmitt = Location in F.S. Schmitt's *Opera Omnia*, Volume 2 (Page:Line)

Term	CDH	Schmitt
honorem	I.10	66:17
honor	I.11	68:17
honorem	I.11	68:20
exhonorat	I.11	68:21
honorem	I.11	68:25
honorem	I.11	68:25
exhonorat	I.11	68:26
exhonoravit	I.11	68:27
honorem	I.11	68:29
honoris	I.12	69:9
honorem	I.13	71:6
honorem	I.13	71:8
honorem	I.13	71:15
honorem	I.13	71:19
honor	I.13	71:24
honor	I.14	72:2
honor	I.14	72:4
honor	I.14	72:4
honor	I.14	72:5
honorem	I.14	72:6
honorem	I.14	72:8
honorem	I.14	72:20
honorem	I.15	72:24
honorem	I.15	72:26
honori	I.15	72:29
honor	I.15	72:30
honorare	I.15	73:1
honorat	I.15	73:3
inhonorat	I.15	73:7
honorare	I.15	74:4
exhonorare	I.15	74:5
honoro	I.20	86:28
honorem	I.22	90:11
honorem	I.22	90:15
honorem	I.22	90:17
honoraverit	I.22	90:18
inhonoravit	I.22	90:19
honorem	II.11	110:23
honorem	II.11	111:2
exhonoraret	II.11	111:10
honorem	II.11	111:11
honorem	II.11	111:16
honorem	II.11	111:18
honorem	II.18	127:10
honorem	II.18	129:15

Term	CDH	Schmitt
honor	II.18	129:17
honorem	II.18	129:18

Term	CDH	Schmitt
iustitiae	I.3	51:8
iustitiam	I.7	55:11
iustitiam	I.7	55:14
iuste	I.7	55:16
iniustam	I.7	56:1
iuste	I.7	56:1
iustius	I.7	57:4
iudex	I.7	57:5
iniuste	I.7	57:6
iniustitia	I.7	57:7
iuste	I.7	57:8
iniuste	I.7	57:8
iniustius	I.7	57:11
iustitiae	I.7	57:11
iustitiam	I.7	57:15
iuste	I.7	57:16
iustum	I.7	57:18
iniustum	I.7	57:18
iustum	I.7	57:18
iniustum	I.7	57:19
iniuste	I.7	57:19
iuste	I.7	57:20
iniuste	I.7	57:21
iniusta	I.7	57:22
iusta	I.7	57:23
iniuste	I.7	57:23
iuste	I.7	57:23
iusta	I.7	57:23
iniusta	I.7	57:24
iustam	I.7	57:24
iniustam	I.7	57:25
iuste	I.7	57:25
iuste	I.7	57:26
iuste	I.7	57:27
iustitia	I.7	57:27
iuste	I.7	57:27
iusto	I.7	57:28
iuste	I.7	58:4
iustitiam	I.7	58:5
iusto	I.7	58:8
iustitiam	I.7	59:2
iniustitia	I.7	59:3
iustitia	I.7	59:3
iustum	I.8	60:2
iustitia	I.8	60:5

Term	CDH	Schmitt
iustissimum	I.8	60:5
iustum	I.8	60:9
iustitiam	I.8	60:10
iustitiam	I.9	61:13
iustam	I.9	61:29
iustam	I.9	61:32
iustitiam	I.9	62:7
iustam	I.9	63:20
iusta	I.9	63:22
iuste	I.10	64:19
iustitia	I.11	68:15
iustos	I.11	68:16
iniuste	I.11	68:28
iustitiam	I.12	69:22
iniustitia	I.12	69:27
iustitia	I.12	69:28
iniustitiam	I.12	69:29
iniustitia	I.12	69:30
iustum	I.12	70:15
iustum	I.12	70:15
iustum	I.12	70:16
iustum	I.12	70:17
iustum	I.12	70:21
iustum	I.12	70:25
iustum	I.12	70:26
iustum	I.12	70:27
iniuste	I.12	70:28
iniustius	I.13	71:10
iniustius	I.13	71:13
iustius	I.13	71:15
iustitia	I.13	71:16
iustius	I.13	71:19
iustus	I.13	71:25
iniusti	I.17	75:25
iustis	I.17	75:25
iustitiam	I.18	78:30
iustitia	I.18	81:17
iniustitiam	I.18	81:21
iustitia	I.18	81:22
iusti	I.18	82:4
iniusti	I.18	82:5
iusti	I.18	82:23
iusti	I.18	82:24
iuste	I.18	83:7
iustitiae	I.18	83:12

Term	CDH	Schmitt
iustos	I.18	83:18
iniustus	I.19	86:3
iniustus	I.20	88:1
iniustitia	I.20	88:1
iustitiam	I.20	88:2
iniustitias	I.20	88:2
iuste	I.22	90:21
iuste	I.23	90:28
iustitiam	I.23	91:10
iustius	I.23	91:15
iustitiam	I.23	91:16
iustitiam	I.23	91:16
iustificentur	I.23	91:23
iustificare	I.23	91:25
iustius	I.23	91:27
iniustus	I.24	92:6
iniustus	I.24	92:7
iniustus	I.24	92:8
iniustus	I.24	92:9
iustitiam	I.24	92:29
iniustus	I.24	93:4
iniustus	I.24	93:5
iniustus	I.24	93:5
iniustus	I.24	93:7
iustitia	I.24	93:9
iniustitia	I.24	93:9
iustitiae	I.24	93:25
iniustus	I.24	94:3
iniustus	I.24	94:5
iustitiae	I.24	94:8
iustum	II.1	97:3
iustam	II.1	97:4
iustum	II.1	97:6
iniustum	II.1	97:6
iusta	II.1	97:16
iusta	II.1	97:17
iusta	II.1	97:18
iusta	II.1	97:20
iusta	II.1	98:1
iusta	II.1	98:3
iustus	II.1	98:5
iustitiae	II.2	98:9
iustum	II.2	98:10

Term	CDH	Schmitt
iustius	II.3	98:23
iustitia	II.3	98:24
iniustitia	II.3	98:25
iustius	II.6	101:15
iustitia	II.10	106:11
iustitiam	II.10	107:12
iustus	II.10	107:12
iustitia	II.10	107:13
iustitiam	II.10	107:15
iusti	II.10	107:16
iustitia	II.10	107:22
iustitia	II.10	107:27
iustitiam	II.10	108:1
iustum	II.10	108:1
iustitiam	II.10	108:2
iustum	II.10	108:2
iustitiam	II.10	108:3
iustitia	II.10	108:4
iustus	II.10	108:5
iustus	II.10	108:10
iustitia	II.10	108:14
iustitia	II.10	108:17
iustitiam	II.10	110:26
iustum	II.11	111:10
iustitia	II.11	112:3
iustitia	II.16	120:18
iustitiam	II.18	127:10
iustitiam	II.18	127:13
iustitiam	II.18	127:18
iustitia	II.18	127:20
iniustus	II.19	130:7
iustum	II.19	130:25
iustitiam	II.19	130:30
iustius	II.19	130:32
iustitiam	II.19	131:19
iustitiam	II.19	131:21
iusta	II.20	131:26
iustitiam	II.20	131:27
iustitiae	II.20	131:28
iustior	II.20	131:29
iustius	II.20	132:4
iustitiam	II.21	132:11
iustitiam	II.21	132:13

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debeat	I.1	48:9-10
debes	I.1	49:3
debet	I.1	49:23
debebit	I.2	50:11
debitis	I.3	51:1
indebita	I.3	51:1
debuisse	I.4	52:4
debueret	I.4	52:8
debuisse	I.7	55:13
debuit	I.7	56:6
debet	I.7	57:20
debuit	I.7	57:22
debet	I.7	58:12
debemus	I.7	59:2
deberet	I.7	59:5
debet	I.8	59:10
debet	I.9	61:16
debebat	I.9	61:18
deberet	I.9	61:25
deberet	I.9	61:25
deberet	I.9	62:3
debeat	I.9	62:13
debet	I.9	63:20
debuisse	I.10	66:21
debet	I.11	68:7
debitum	I.11	68:10
debitum	I.11	68:11
debemus	I.11	68:11
debet	I.11	68:12
debitum	I.11	68:14
debet	I.11	68:14
debemus	I.11	68:17
debitum	I.11	68:20
debet	I.11	68:23
debet	I.11	68:28
debet	I.11	68:29
debet	I.11	69:2
debiti	I.12	69:6
debemus	I.12	70:12
debitum	I.13	71:6
debitum	I.13	71:8
debere	I.13	71:12
debet	I.14	72:9
debitam	I.14	72:9
debet	I.15	72:26

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debeat	I.15	73:3
debet	I.15	73:3
debet	I.15	73:6
debet	I.15	73:24
debent	I.17	75:19
debetur	I.18	77:14
debeat	I.18	79:10
debebit	I.18	79:15
debeat	I.18	79:18
debes	I.18	79:27
deberet	I.18	80:2
debere	I.18	82:16
debet	I.19	85:2
debeat	I.19	85:4
debiti	I.19	85:28
debita	I.19	86:1
debemus	I.19	86:3
debet	I.19	86:8
debet	I.19	86:8
debes	I.20	87:3
debes	I.20	87:3
debito	I.20	87:4
debes	I.20	87:4
debes	I.20	87:4
debet	I.20	87:5
debeas	I.20	87:8
debes	I.20	87:14
debito	I.20	87:14
debet	I.20	87:17
debes	I.20	87:23
debes	I.20	87:24
debeo	I.20	87:25
debeo	I.20	87:27
debere	I.21	88:14
deberes	I.21	88:22
debeam	I.21	88:24
deberem	I.21	89:12
debueras	I.21	89:28
debito	I.21	89:30
debet	I.21	89:31
debet	I.22	90:20
debemus	I.23	91:1
debet	I.23	91:18
debet	I.24	92:2
debet	I.24	92:6

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debet	I.24	92:7
debitum	I.24	92:12
debito	I.24	92:21
debebat	I.24	92:23
debet	I.24	92:23
debet	I.24	92:25
debet	I.24	92:25
debet	I.24	92:26
debet	I.24	92:26
debet	I.24	92:29
debet	I.24	92:31
debet	I.24	92:32
debet	I.24	93:1
debet	I.24	93:4
debet	I.24	93:11
debet	I.24	93:13
debet	I.24	93:15
deberet	I.24	93:16
debet	I.24	93:18
debet	I.24	93:22
debet	I.24	93:23
debet	I.24	93:23
debet	I.24	93:30
debere	I.24	94:13
debito	I.24	94:14
debetur	I.24	94:15
debes	I.24	94:17
debet	I.24	94:20
debet	I.25	94:26
debet	I.25	94:27
debes	I.25	95:1
debere	I.25	95:30
debet	I.25	96:3
debere	I.25	96:8
debet	I.25	96:13
debet	II.1	97:5
debeat	II.1	97:22
debet	II.3	98:15
debemus	II.5	99:20
debetur	II.5	99:24
debetur	II.5	100:1
debet	II.5	100:7
debitor em	II.5	100:8
debeat	II.5	100:11
debemus	II.5	100:17

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debet	II.6	101:14
debet	II.6	101:18
debebit	II.7	102:14
debet	II.7	102:17
debebit	II.8	102:30
debet	II.8	103:5
debeat	II.8	103:25
debet	II.8	104:26
debeat	II.9	105:10
debent	II.9	105:14
debito	II.10	106:10
debito	II.10	106:13
debito	II.10	106:14
debemus	II.10	106:14
debebit	II.10	106:15
debere	II.10	106:19
debebitur	II.10	107:13
deberentur	II.10	107:17
debuit	II.10	108:20
debebit	II.10	108:26
debemus	II.11	109:6
debere	II.11	109:19
debito	II.11	110:10
debebit	II.11	110:18
debitor	II.11	110:23
debito	II.11	110:27
debet	II.11	110:27
debito	II.11	111:2
debebit	II.11	111:4
debito	II.11	111:17
debito	II.11	111:23
deberent	II.11	112:1
debet	II.13	112:16
debeat	II.14	113:26
debere	II.14	114:7
debetur	II.14	114:30
debere	II.15	116:10
debeat	II.15	116:11
debemus	II.16	117:4
deberet	II.16	117:8
debeat	II.16	118:24
debet	II.16	119:23
debeat	II.16	119:31
debes	II.16	121:4
debet	II.17	124:15

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debebat	II.17	124:24
debitum	II.17	126:16
debuit	II.18	126:22
debuit	II.18	126:22
debuisset	II.18	126:28
debebat	II.18	126:29
debitum	II.18	126:29
deberet	II.18	127:1
debebat	II.18	127:3
debetur	II.18	127:8
debent	II.18	127:21
debebat	II.18	127:28
debebat	II.18	127:30
debebat	II.18	128:1
debebat	II.18	128:6
debuisset	II.18	128:8
debuisset	II.18	128:10
debeat	II.18	128:11
debere	II.18	128:16
debere	II.18	128:20
debere	II.18	128:21
debet	II.18	128:22
debere	II.18	128:23
debito	II.18	128:24
debet	II.18	128:25
debito	II.18	128:26
debet	II.18	128:26
debere	II.18	128:27
debito	II.18	128:28
debere	II.18	128:30
debere	II.18	128:31
debitum	II.18	128:32
debere	II.18	129:1
debitor	II.18	129:2
debent	II.18	129:2
debere	II.18	129:3
debet	II.18	129:3
debere	II.18	129:4
debet	II.18	129:5
debuit	II.18	129:6
debuit	II.18	129:7
debuit	II.18	129:7
debito	II.18	129:8
deberet	II.18	129:10
deberet	II.18	129:13

Term	CDH	Schmitt
debito	II.18	129:14
debuit	II.18	129:16
debere	II.19	130:6
debuit	II.19	130:12
debet	II.19	130:16
debita	II.19	130:18
debetur	II.19	130:23
debiti	II.19	130:32
debitis	II.19	131:1
debent	II.19	131:2
debebat	II.19	131:22
debebat	II.19	131:24
debito	II.20	132:5
debito	II.20	132:5
debitum	II.20	132:6
debuit	II.21	132:16
debet	II.21	132:16
debent	II.21	132:21
debere	II.21	132:24
debemus	II.22	133:14

Term	CDH	Schmitt
satisfacere	I.1	47:8
satisfactionem	I.1	47:10
satisfacere	I.2	50:10-11
satisfacere	I.11	68:2
satisfacere	I.11	68:5
satisfactio	I.11	69:1
satisfactione	I.12	69:12
satisfactio	I.15	73:19
satisfaciente	I.15	73:20
satisfactio	I.15	74:1
satisfecisti	I.15	74:3
satisfactione	I.19	84:5
satisfecit	I.19	84:18
satisfactione	I.19	84:22
satis	I.19	85:15
satisfactione	I.19	85:22
satisfactione	I.19	85:28
satisfactionem	I.20	86:17
satisfactionem	I.20	86:20
satisfactionem	I.21	88:14
satisfactionem	I.21	89:25
satisfacis	I.21	89:27
satisfacere	I.22	90:3
satisfaciat	I.23	91:11
satisfactione	I.24	93:24
satis	I.25	95:11
satisfactio	I.25	95:30
satisfecisti	II.3	98:26
satisfactionem	II.4	99:10
satisfactionem	II.6	101:2
satisfactionem	II.6	101:12
satisfacit	II.6	101:14
satisfactio	II.6	101:17
satisfactionem	II.7	102:16
satisfacere	II.8	102:30
satisfaciat	II.8	103:1
satisfaciens	II.8	103:2
satisfaciet	II.8	103:3
satisfacere	II.8	103:5
satisfecisti	II.10	108:13
satisfaciat	II.11	111:9
satisfaciens	II.11	111:10
satisfaciendo	II.11	111:13
satisfacere	II.11	111:20
satisfacere	II.16	118:18

Term	CDH	Schmitt
satisfacias	II.16	122:21
satisfecisti	II.17	126:3
satisfecisse	II.19	131:13
satisfeceret	II.19	131:21
satisfacias	II.22	133:8

Appendix B

Scripture References in the *CDH*

F.S. Schmitt tracked a number of references to scripture in the *CDH* and this appendix contains a listing of those references.

Reference = Scripture Location (Book Chapter:Verse – References to Psalms are according to the LXX numbering)

CDH = Location in the *Cur Deus Homo* (Book.Chapter; P = Prologue)

Schmitt = Location in F.S. Schmitt's *Opera Omnia*, Volume 2 (Page:Line)

Reference	CDH	Schmitt
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Old Testament

Deuteronomy 32:8	I.18	81:31-32
Deuteronomy 32:8	I.18	82:17-19
Job 14:5	P	40:3
Psalms 35:11	I.11	68:16
Psalms 35:7-8	I.24	94:11-12
Psalms 44:3	I.1	49:18
Psalms 50:7	I.22	90:24
Psalms 50:7	II.16	116:22
Psalms 65:20	II.6	101:20
Psalms 77:39	I.7	58:11
Psalms 109:7	I.9	62:19
Ecclesiastes 3:22	I.1	48:25-26
Isaiah 53:7	I.10	66:9
Isaiah 53:7	II.17	124:27
Ezekiel 18:22	I.20	88:2
Ezekiel 18:27	I.20	88:1-2
Ezekiel 33:16	I.20	88:2

Apocrypha

Baruk 3:38	II.11	111:31-32
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New Testament

Matthew 3:17	I.8	60:3-4
Matthew 6:12	I.12	69:31-32
Matthew 6:12	I.19	86:1
Matthew 7:12	I.20	87:15-17
Matthew 10:8	I.1	49:5
Matthew 26:39	I.8	60:23-24
Matthew 26:39	I.9	63:25-26
Matthew 26:42	I.8	60:25
Matthew 26:42	I.9	63:27
Luke 2:52	I.9	63:14
Luke 6:48	II.19	131:10-12
Luke 10:22	I.9	62:22-23
Luke 20:36	I.5	52:22
John 6:38	I.8	60:20-21
John 6:38	I.9	63:17-18
John 6:44	I.10	65:1

Reference	CDH	Schmitt
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New Testament (Cont.)

John 6:71	I.18	83:10
John 7:16	I.9	63:18
John 8:34	I.7	58:11
John 8:44	II.21	132:23
John 8:55	II.10	106:24-25
John 10:17	I.10	66:9-12
John 10:17	II.11	110:1
John 14:31	I.8	60:22
John 14:31	I.9	62:10
John 14:31	I.9	64:10
John 14:31	I.10	64:15-16
John 14:31	I.10	65:9-10
John 16:15	I.9	62:23
John 18:11	I.8	60:22-23
John 18:11	I.9	62:11
John 18:11	I.9	64:10-11
John 18:11	I.10	64:16
John 18:11	I.10	65:9-10
John 18:11	I.10	66:1
Acts 10:35	I.18	78:30
Romans 5:12	II.16	116:23-24
Romans 5:19	I.3	51:5-7
Romans 8:32	I.8	60:19-20
Romans 8:32	I.9	63:23-24
Romans 8:32	I.10	64:16-17
Romans 8:32	I.10	65:11-12
Romans 8:32	I.10	65:13
Romans 12:19	I.12	70:3
1 Corinthians 2:8	II.15	115:12-13
1 Corinthians 15:42	II.11	109:11
2 Corinthians 4:4	II.9	105:25
2 Corinthians 9:7	I.16	74:17
Galatians 5:6	I.20	87:30
Ephesians 2:4	I.25	94:27-28
Philippians 2:8	I.8	60:17-18
Philippians 2:8	I.9	62:11-12
Philippians 2:8	I.9	64:11
Philippians 2:8	I.10	64:17-18
Philippians 2:8	I.10	65:15
Philippians 2:9	I.9	62:17-18

Reference	CDH	Schmitt
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New Testament (Cont.)

Colossians 1:15	II.9	105:25
Colossians 2:14	I.7	58:1
Hebrews 4:15	II.11	111:26-27
Hebrews 5:8	I.8	60:18-19
Hebrews 5:8	I.10	64:18
Hebrews 5:8	I.10	65:16
James 1:17	I.10	64:21-22
1 Peter 3:15	I.1	47:10-11
2 Peter 3:13	I.18	79:28
Apocalypse 21:1	I.18	79:28

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